NED BENTLEY,

A NOVEL.

VOL. II.

NED BENTLEY,

A NOVEL,

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY

J. AMPHLETT.

A friendless son,
O! Britain, through thy little bustling world,
Shapes his adventrous course.

VOL. II.

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CHAPTER I.

"—— Ah me! how many woes
Against this little throb of life conspire."

Ned was awoke in the morning by the twittering of birds, which, building at his window, gave him a peal to remind him of the purposes of TIME; the sun flung his chaste morning beams aslant his chamber, and the modest jessamine, that had insinuated itself through the casement, saluted him with its primest odors,—as though nature, by offering to the senses an incorruptible enjoyment, would lead the reflecting mind to its own divine purity.

...ORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASW...

Cheerful to the eye of health, are the gladdening beams of the rising day, and exhilarating are the sounds of life, where the renovated frame, springing with the elasticity of health, bounds to the impulse of its impatient spirit. Not so to the bed of sickness, where the languid frame in spiritless exhaustion, pines in inquietude; where the restless eye, mindless alike of light or darkness, rolls rayless in its orb.

Thus "heavily and in clouds" came on the day to the aged foreigner, *De Laurent*. A fever rolled its hot current through his veins, and his burning eye, with dead and vacant stare, fell undiscriminating on the people around him. Our hero was one of the first at the bed of pain; he deeply grieved for the fate of his companion—in the house of a stranger, and far from home and relatives—an exile, wandering in

misery and overtaken by sickness! Strange complication of evils! Dreadful wreck of all that is dear to the heart of man! Out of respect to the great services done to the family by our hero, Mr. Bidlake insisted that every comfort and accommodation should be afforded the sufferer; a doctor was accordingly called in, and proper medicines were administered.— Ned's sorrow was so far relieved, and he met the family at a late breakfast table with a tolerable complacency of mind. There was more respect in Mrs. Bidlake's morning curtsey than Ned had before seen. Her fair daughter, with a tremulous and half-averted eye, and her cheek mantling with a changeful hue, gave the morning's salutation with modesty and grace. After a few ordinary condolements, Ned ran over his acquaintance with the unfortunate old man. Mr. Bidlake's kindness, how-

ever, did not abate from the consideration that he was equally a stranger to our hero as to himself. He entreated Ned to prolong his stay for a day or two, and the ladies joined so entreatingly in the request, that he suffered himself to be prevailed upon. In the evening, the fever of the foreigner had somewhat abated, and Ned received a summons to attend him alone.

He was sitting up in bed, and, waving his hand, the attendants withdrew. Our hero approached, and sat down beside him, and soothed him with the assurance of the best wishes of the family on whose protection he had accidentally been thrown. De Laurent appeared to be collecting his thoughts, but received the information with gratitude.

"You see before you, said he, in a weak and faltering tone, the ex-

hausted frame of one who was once the sun of his little circle of acquaintance; one who was born, and who has mostly lived among, the quiet retreats of village society. There likewise would I have wished to have numbered out my days; but Heaven has willed it otherwise. My friends are all either fallen victims to the times, or are distributed over the face of the earth, and wander in exile,—exposed to all the evils of poverty and contempt. Further particulars it is not necessary to my purpose, nor to yours, that you should know. I have been the comet of admiration, but my fires are shot; my day is gone by, and I must go down to the dust in common with the humblest of my race. From all that I have been able to collect by a scattered observation of your character and designs, I have conceived a peculiar esteem for you. I now address

you from my death-bed; accept of the fruit of experience without tracing the means by which it has been acquired. You are young; rich in purity of mind, and extended prospects of life. Were I permitted to tread back the steps of time, I would prefer your state of mind and your prospects, on the common beaten road of fortune, to all the establishments that splendor could offer. I am convinced that there is no mind so constituted for superior enjoyments, as that which raises its own fortunes; before which the barriers of ignorance and poverty alike give way, and whose self-emanating beams can shed a richer radiance on the track of BEING, than ever was elicited from the congregated efforts of laborious learning. But extraordinary power of mind, requires a prudence still more extraordinary than itself, to direct it at once most to its own benefit and the benefit of society. To advise you on this point, my

young friend, was my object in soliciting this visit. There has been a time when I was too proud to advise; when I considered the stores of this brain too estimable to be lavished on the sons of men. Painful remembrance of most despicable vanity! It were idle, my son, to warn you against the common vices and follies of the world; you have only to see and to shun them. But avoid the obliquities to which you may be led, even by virtue. If you find yourself caught but in the snares of frivolity, do not stay politely to disentangle the web, but break your bonds and recover your ground. The advocates of sin do not merit the considerations of politeness, and there are more lost from a deference to gentlemanly emancipation from vice, than there are from a disposition to continue in its practice. We are commonly more deceitful in our promises to our-

selves, than we are to other people. We tamper with the difficulties of amendment, alternately furious and indifferent; till familiarized with failure and mortification we gradually lose the inclination, and with that the power, to reform.

Alas! how infinitely more easy it is to continue in the practice of virtue, than reform in the habits of vice!

There are many in whom virtue is a mere negative quality. There is a native dullness and indifference of character, that is alike incapable of being stimulated to any thing good or bad. A most obstinate and intractable stupidity stands centinel on the brain, and they atchieve nothing but what a kind of physical necessity compels them to. They are to be considered only as the land-marks of in-

tellect; denoting that you approach the shore. But to see displayed the highest qualities of virtue, we should observe a strong mind, vivid propensities and feelings, and a native impulse of honor, hemmed in by difficulty and distress—stung by contempt and benumbed with the torpor of inaction;—its efforts, like lightning amid the clouds, breaking brilliantly thro' its misty incumbrance, and shedding its radiance in contrast to the night in which it is involved. That is virtue! Such is often its fate, but where, alas! is its reward?"

De Laurent's voice, at this period, had acquired an unusual energy, and his brain appeared to fire with the rapidity of his thoughts. He held our hero fast by the hand, who entreated him to moderate his feelings out of regard to the weakness of his state.

He continued, 'but, alas! his reason, like an ill-balanced planet, had darted from its orbit and wandered in governless uncertainty. Ned was deeply affected, and called in the assistants; with whom he for awhile left him. He retired, musing on the exalted sentiments and character of his late companion, and ejaculated to himself,

"Oh! what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!"

He strayed into the garden—Miss Bidlake appeared before him, and he approached her with increased gladness, as though the mind, surcharged with painful recollections, like an object electrified, sought relief in communication.

How is your friend? asked the hesitating fair.

He is delirious, madam; yet he spoke impressive truths. He represented candour and purity of mind, as the handmaids of happiness.

I am sorry that he is so ill, but old people always talk in that manner. They continually tell us of their happy school-days, as though they envied past time for nothing but its idleness; they want to go back to the days of unconcern. Now I think that half the pleasures of life are intimately connected with its cares; don't you think so, Mr. Bentley?

Yes, said Ned, with a sigh that he could not suppress. The arch eyes of Miss Bidlake were turned full upon him. He was aware of them, and endeavoured to evade their scrutiny. Your observation, he continued, is peculiarly just. When our race is nearly

run, we look back on the sweeping journey of life, to the time that we travelled with the least labour; to the period that reflects no painful recollections; when, like the starting racer, we cantered in idle dalliance along, and required the curb instead of the spur.—You will excuse, madam, such a jockey-like comparison.

O! it is a very just one, replied the lady; and, perhaps, it is more true than we are aware, that old people, instead of *knowing more*, have only *suffered more* than young ones.

Are not our sufferings a source of knowledge? asked Ned.

If they be, Mr. Bentley, it is a *hateful knowledge*. If you tell me how excruciating is the pain of the toothache, it will not secure me against the

complaint. Old people may as well say, O! don't catch a fever! never tumble down! never fall in love ——!

——Here she stopt suddenly and blushed. Ned was half-inclined to laugh. He assured her that he was almost a convert to her opinions. I am surprized, however, he added, that you should have reckoned *love* among the *accidents* of life; that you should have classed it with the tooth-ache, fevers and broken shins!

The colour had not yet left her cheek; confusion and embarrassment had arrested the playfulness of her fancy, and she burst into tears. Ned was not proof against such an appeal; he was subdued by a soft and sweet sorrow; and could not but consider her grief as flowing from a mind that was wounded in its choicest feelings.

He soothed her delicacy therefore by a half-reproachful censure of himself, and in a manner and voice so sympathetic and regretful, that she soon recovered her serenity. She was attempting to say something in a more lively strain, by way of explaining away her tears, but perceiving her reflections again recurring to the ungrateful subject, he abruptly led her attention to some other object. They now received a summons to supper. Ned solicited the honor of attending her. She brushed away her cares, and giving him her hand as a token of a good understanding, they repaired to the supper room.

After supper, Ned intimated his intention of sitting up the night with his friend. Mr. Bidlake endeavoured to dissuade him from the undertaking, and said that every attendance had been

provided. He then mentioned the Doctor's opinion, that *he might not out-live the night.* This, however, only confirmed our hero in his resolution, and at eleven o'clock he took his solitary seat by the bed of his companion. A servant was ordered to sleep within call, and different medicines were arranged, to be administered at stated periods of the night.

A gentle slumber had given a respite to the troublous mind of the sick philosopher. Ned watched his countenance with the utmost attention. A quick convulsive motion that occasionally played on his features, and a short and obstructed breathing, seemed to denote that it was only the benumbed repose of exhaustion. He presently awoke, and perceiving Ned by his side, a faint smile of joy passed sickly over his clammy face. He held out his lean

and withered hand, and intimated that he wanted something from his pockets. Ned searched, and brought out several letters. De Laurent looked them over, and selecting two of them, requested, in case of his death, that the others might be burnt. Ned signified an obedience to his wishes. He then put one of the letters into the hand of our hero, and begged that it might be delivered as addressed. Ned gave his promise. He now appeared desirous of saying something particular about the other; and after several ineffectual struggles to convey his ideas, he pressed the letter in the hand of our hero, with an ardor and anxiety of mind that bespoke an unusual interest in its concerns. More he could not do; he threw himself back on the pillow, and seemed to resign himself to the powerful hand of death; under the gripe of which he panted, as in despair of escape.

Time crept slowly and solemnly on. The dead stillness of the night, and the awful consideration of a mortal being about to finish his earthly career, made a deep impression on the mind of Ned. A dying philosopher, making up his account for the other world! About to draw the curtain of fate! One who evidently belonged to no sect of religion, but approached the verge of existence as the portals of intellectual extinction! The pride of reason, his only support, was gone; and though silence had sealed his lips on the subject, a visible anxiety preyed on his mind. But a life of the purest morality, affords a poor anchorage of hope to a dying man. However plausible a plea it may appear to a being in good health and high spirits, amid the passing considerations of busy life—yet, when the time approaches, in which we have nothing else to think on, me-

mory will be found faithful to the dark side of the picture as well as the light one. Let no man presume on his strength of mind; all minds are weak on a death-bed. *There* the most humble may be exalted, and the most exalted be humbled.

Ned had marked the old man's evasion of religious subjects in his former advice, and attributed it to a perplexity of mind; to an indecision on his own life, as though he were labouring to the last to buoy up his confidence in himself. He therefore avoided distressing him by any allusions of the kind, unless he voluntarily led to the discussion.

About two o'clock, De Laurent became more restless and perturbed in his manners, as though his spirit was being pressed from its mysterious seat.

He turned about in continual uneasiness, and Ned was apprehensive that the old man's last hour was come. The night-light which burned by his side, was now fast waning in its socket, and there was no other in the room. Ned for a moment hesitated, between perplexity and something like fear. He went to the door and called the servant, but was only answered by the audible intimation of a sound sleep. Further hesitation would have left him entirely in the dark; he therefore hastened down stairs for a candle, which had been placed ready in the kitchen. As he was going down, he thought he heard the feet of somebody paddling behind him. But the dying flame could throw no distinguishing light around, and he endeavoured to brush away the thought from his mind. As he was lighting another candle at the fire, he listened attentively to hear

if aught were stirring; and though no sound reached his ear, it was with a kind of forced resolution that he turned round to go back again. As the taper's scarce-lighted flame beamed doubtfully on the rising stair-case, he thought he saw somebody walking up before him. He strained his eyes to determine whether or not it was an illusion, and it disappeared. He ascended towards the room with considerable effort of perseverance, but was struck with a kind of cold horror as he entered, to perceive *the old man getting into bed.* He stood for some time motionless, as though transfixed to the spot. He at length collected his resolution, and approached the bed; he spoke to him, but—*he had no ears to this world!*

Ned had frequently heard of the extraordinary exertions of the dying:

Having therefore overcome his first sensations of terror, he called up the servant, and intimated to him his wish, that the family should not be disturbed. They therefore laid the corpse straight in the bed, with as little noise as possible. Having done this, our hero

"Closed up his eyes, and drew the curtain close."

He then advised the servant to go to bed, and opening the chamber window and locking the door, he put the key in his pocket, and retired to his apartment.——But, not to sleep—— "to meditation."

As soon as the morning light began to creep slowly over the landscape, Ned strayed out, to divert the melancholy of his thoughts. At breakfast time he arranged the business of the

funeral. Sufficient property was found about the foreigner to defray the expences of interment,—but no more. On the third day, the slow and simple procession was made to the parish church, and a small plain stone, at Ned's expence, marked the spot where the philosopher was laid.

Our hero now prepared to take leave of his new friends. Had his heart not been secure in the fullness of its affections, there was a native simplicity and elegance about the daughter of his host, that would have held battle with his heart. But the sweet recollection of the amiable and sprightly Helen, stript all competition of its charms, and grew every day more endearing. To think of her, became his most choice indulgence.—When he brooded over his future schemes, it was Helen that was his

reigning motive, and his hoped-for reward. Absence only confirmed and chastened his admiration of her, and he would frequently ruminate on the delicious theme, till he was heart-sick at the recollected distance that separated them.

The morning succeeding the burial of his friend, Ned took an affecting leave of the family on which he had so opportunely been thrown, and the remembrance of which was connected with events so extraordinary, that it never could be erased. A promise however had been claimed from him, that he should rank them among his future friends.

Once more on his road of fortune, Ned particularly directed his attention to the letters entrusted to him by his late companion. One was addressed

to Lord Berrington, of Liverpool; and the other, concerning which his interest was most excited, to *Theodore Anderton,* to be left at an obscure inn, of the same place. He placed them carefully in a side pocket, and pursued his journey.

The second day's sun was declining rapidly beneath the horizon, when the proud spires of that magnificent and populous town peeped through the grey mist of evening, and saluted our hero on his dusty pilgrimage. He entered the thronged and busy streets, a perfect stranger to every individual that they contained; and continued walking heedlessly on, with no settled direction in his mind that could point to preference. He observed the passing multitude, with their countenances full of purpose; regarding each other, as it were, only as the obstruc-

tions of their passage! And he observed them with painful thought. On a heart, open to the whole human race, and a mind, prompt in the disposal of its services, nothing presses so coldly as the unconcern of mankind; it bears like the hand of death, on the best affections of our nature, and contracts every generous desire to the solitary purposes of self. The state of a mind, holding no communication with others, is like the sensation of *standing still*, to the body. We elbow ourselves, by degrees, into a little acquaintance; we excite attention by respect and conciliation; and he must be but a sorry observer of himself who cannot recollect the pleasure which he has received from the slightest instances of disinterested behaviour in a stranger.

After pacing several streets, our hero entered a neat and humble inn. A servant attended to usher him into an apartment; which, however, looking chill, and comfortless, and empty, he declined the honor of occupying. Perceiving the company to be agreeable and merry round the kitchen fire, and not choosing to sacrifice his comfort to his pride, he sat himself down among them;—deferring till the next day the delivery of his entrusted letters. The company before him appeared to be of a stamp rather above the ordinary visitants of an alehouse kitchen, and our hero, after drinking a glass or two to their healths, found himself treated with a cordiality and good humour that, in part, dissipated his melancholy and his cares. To the servant girl, who was clean, and rather handsome, he spoke with more respect, perhaps, than is common; and

he was waited on with an alacrity and attention that acknowledged his kindness. She bespoke him the best bed, and prepared him a comfortable supper; after which he entered with an increased glee into the conversation and concerns of the people about him.

As his eye wandered over the physiognomy of the company, he was struck with the appearance of a youth in a naval dress; apparently not more than seventeen years of age. He had kept his eye almost constantly on Ned, but appeared not to notice, or notice very slightly, any thing that was said or done. He was rather tall for his age than not, with a frame tending to slimness; but sinewy withal, and seemed accusstomed to, and formed to bear fatigue. The rest of the company were a few strolling comedians, who were now discussing with great vehe-

mence of action, and style, the measures of government. The *Rolla* of the company, with his usual kingly gesture, was holding forth on the old grating subject of places and pensions. War, taxes and revolutions, all in their turn, came under the searching eye of disputation. "Wealth," cried the tragedian, "is the key to every thing; to virtue, to merit and to fame. With wealth, the poet receives admiration, and the prime-minister support. Give a man wealth, and like a rolling snow-ball, he may accumulate even to incumbrance. And as it boots not to the ball, what may be its nucleus, metal or mud,– so wisdom or folly—wit or idiotism, alike make their way thro' the world, if, with this all-attracting atmosphere, they commence the motion of life. But, gentlemen, there is an end to all things; and this glut of national stupidity, will, of itself, lead

to regeneration. What places "ME, ROLLA," here, on the very thresh-hold of famine, as one may say? what but a horrible degeneracy and inversion of the natural order of things? Look into the church, where virtue, wisdom and eloquence ought to unite, in order to qualify the religious and moral instructors of the nation. Who see you there but a drivelling curate who drones for his bread; or some lifeless mummy of intemperance? Look at the Bar. Who see you there, but the creatures of patronage; the younger & unprovided sons of an effeminate generation of gentlemen? Oratory, there, like a painted puppet, with its gown and wig, plays off its despicable imitations, like some vile stage-mimic—aping an excellence it cannot reach. Look at the STAGE, Gentlemen! either as to authors or to actors! What do you see in the former, but so many drama-

tic tailors, who cut out dialogue, character and situation, to fit particular men, and particular purposes? If they miss their fit, their goods are returned. Passion and poetry are but the shreds and patches of this parnassian shop-board—showing off some whimsical peculiarity of countenance in one man, or turn of expression in another.—What is a comedian now, but a detestable caricature of nature; his performance a daub, etched without either taste or design. The whole is one tissue of absurdity—unrelieved by any thing, in the shape of consistency or common sense.

. . . . .

Gentlemen, it is too disgusting a task to enumerate the catalogue of natural imbecility; I have done.—There are earthquakes in the moral as well as the physical world. "Tread on others, or be trod on," is the motto of

the times. Violence justifies violence; —happen what may, *I have nothing to lose.*"

"Nothing to lose!"—echoed Ned, who had listened attentively to him from the beginning. Pray, sir, what countryman are you?

An Englishman, sir.

An Englishman! It is fit that I memorandum you then, as one of the worst that I ever heard. You have *nothing*, indeed sir, to lose of any consequeace, for you appear already to have lost your senses.

The tragedian with great warmth, was going to reply, but Ned continued. "I have heard sir, with disgust and detestation your very *impartial*

review of the Church, the Bar, and the Stage; and I have noted your conclusion. Sir, *I* am an Englishman; poor as you may be—be you poor as you may, and have nothing to be proud of but my country. I stand sir, on the lowest step of society—but in a nation where the highest is within my reach. Courage and clean hands may not always succeed, but they never ignobly fail; and next to the honor of success, I would prefer that of having deserved to be successful. Sir, I am now on the ocean of life, under no sail but the impulse of my own mind; and that fortune which I can fairly atchieve, I hope to have the moderation of temper to enjoy. Every man has enough to complain of, if he have an eye only to abuses. The Church may abuse its patronage; the Bar may have its fops; and the Stage its aberrations of folly—it is but in the course of things; but,

on the whole, sir, they contribute to our national honor and security. Would you revolutionize the state to strip an unworthy clergyman of his gown, a barrister of his robe, or an actor of his salary? This slanderous declaiming, sir, is but the oozing gall of envy and intemperate ambition; that would attain by chance or violence, what it should pursue by the gradations of labour and desert. Pursue then honorably, sir, the track of your profession, and leave the rest to fortune. You appear to have a mind equal to the highest purposes of your pursuit; abandon then this derilection of all integrity of principle, and if you are not to rise into eminence, at least secure the satisfaction of having employed no means that can render failure disgraceful."

As soon as Ned concluded, the young sailor started from his seat, and

grasping him by the hand, swore he was a king—though he happened to be without subjects. Give me a little phalanx of such souls as you, he cried, and I would see what *courage and clean hands* could not accomplish.—The tragedian and his companions now made a kind of grumbling exit; and Ned and his friend pledged themselves in a bottle of the landlord's brown stout. Having drank off a bumper to our hero, the sailor dashed his glass on the ground, swearing that it never should be filled to a worse fellow. He then became silent, and thoughtful. Ned spake of his profession. I am a novice in the navy, he replied; but with to-morrow's tide I commence a long and adventrous voyage.

So soon? said Ned.

By the break of day, he added.

Poverty, and pride, and —— sir, I am besieged by miseries; with only one distant ray of hope, breaking feebly through the legioned clouds of a million of dangers and obstructions!

His countenance became, "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." In his agitation, a small medalion had disentangled itself from his bosom, suspended by a golden chain. He thrust it back with great embarrassment of manner, and turned his eyes full upon Ned—but without any distinct expression. He then ordered his bed candle, and shaking our hero by the hand, bade him good night; but with such a sorrowful emphasis, as man would use who never expected to rise again. Ned however promised to accompany him in the morning to the shore, and gave orders to be called accordingly. He then retired to his own apartment for the night.

This is, thought he, but a common scene in a sea-port. Here the sighs of love & friendship, burst the heart strings at almost every tide that flows. Here avarice and ambition weave their webs of speculation and adventure; and despair hauls in her wind of action.

Turning from so painful a subject of thought, and yielding his fancy to the delicious reflections of love, he was soon lost in its imaginary bliss.

In the morning, Ned accompanied the adventrous youth to the shore. He was silent and thoughtful. As they approached the beach, the dismal sound of heaving the anchor reached their ears. All was novelty to Ned. He was an inlander, and his eyes wandered in delightful reverié over the swelling waves; the tremendous guardians of his native land. Great bustle prevailed

in getting the different people and things aboard. The tide was already on its flow, and a shrewd wind blew coldly from the land, with a drizzling rain. The youth took a hasty farewell of our hero, and leaped into the boat, and was presently along-side the vessel, which lay at anchor in the river. His trunks were being put in another boat, and as Ned's eye caught the card of address, nailed on the outside, he was prompted by curiosity to know who the youth might be. But what was his surprise, when he read the name of *Theodore Anderton*? He stood for a moment in a stupor of indecision. The boat was already heaving from shore. They would not allow him to get in, on account of its being so heavily loaded, and he had only just dexterity of mind to charge one of the sailors with the letter entrusted to his care, before they rowed off.

Where is the vessel bound for? asked Ned, of several different people.

To the East Indies, said one; to the West, said another; to the Baltic, said a third, and the fourth sent it to the remaining part of the globe! Ned watched the vessel getting under weigh. Different people on board were waving their handkerchiefs and throwing up their hats. Ned waved his in the air, though he knew not to whom, for distance had shaded all distinction.

On the return of the boatmen, Ned could gain no information that was satisfactory; and he turned his eye from the shore and walked slowly back, doubting in his mind if he had done right in sending the letter on the mere authority of the name. On his reaching the inn, however, all his doubts were removed, as it proved to be the

same as in the address; and his mortification only increased, when he considered that the slightest observation, or enquiry, would have prevented this misfortune. From the people of the inn he could collect nothing that threw any light on the character or designs of their guest. They supposed him to be a gentleman, for he had been there a fortnight, *and had paid for every thing he had.* In the disconsolateness of his recollection, Ned again strayed out, and sauntered idly about, from mere vexation of spirit. He at length enquired for Lord Berrington's, with the hope that he might still find some clue to the character and situation of the interesting youth, whom he had encountered under such unpropitious circumstances. Finding himself at the door of a superb mansion, in one of the retired and elegant streets, our hero hesitated for a moment, how best

to arrange the procedure of his enquiry. The knocker, however, had fallen from his hand before he could decide, and every thing was left to the dictation of circumstances. Before the door was well opened, Ned found himself within the atmosphere of a prodigiously fine footman, whose powdered whiskers had so closely invested the "human face," that scarce aught was distinguishable in its native colour but the nose,—protruding like the flaming top of Hecla, from amidst its waste of snows.

"Was Lord Berrington at home?"

N—No, ——

Ned perceived the oblique drift of this half-negatived reply, and slid his hand into his pocket. He then drew out, with a half-crown in his fingers,

the following supplementary answer. "—— unless he had come in lately. If the gentleman would favor him with his name, he would enquire."

"Tell him," said Ned, retaining the half-crown, "that a stranger has a letter for his lordship, for the possession of which he is indebted to a most extraordinary circumstance." In a few minutes our hero was desired to walk up into the breakfast-room. On his entrance, Ned discovered a plain dressed elderly gentleman, sitting on a sopha, and a most beautiful and interesting female at the breakfast table, serving him with coffee. Ned bowed, and presented the letter, which was handed by an attendant to his lordship. It having been read, it was asked in what *extraordinary* manner our hero came in possession of it. Ned, as briefly as possible, related the death

and burial of De Laurent; of his having entrusted two letters to his care, and the manner in which the other had been delivered.

Were any expences attached to the funeral, which the unfortunate man's finances did not defray?

None, —— of any account.

His lordship observed our hero for some time in silence. You will not, he at length said, consider my motives as ill-meant, when I ask what friends you have in Liverpool?

None, said Ned.

Your profession? asked his lordship.

He could boast no distinct profession.

Your views? continued his lordship, with somewhat increased curiosity.

Your lordship may think, said Ned, that the account I am giving of myself is a strange one, but I have *nothing distinct* in my views.

Perhaps you have independent, tho' confined resources, and travel for observation, said his lordship.

I have no resources, replied Ned, but what are common to the human race.

You have left then, said his lordship, as though determined to succeed in something, your indulgent, though indigent parents, and are seeking your fortune?

I am, indeed! seeking my fortune, said Ned; but neither a parent's nor

relative's anxiety shall mark my course in life.

His lordship again observed our hero in silence. A very extraordinary position in society, he at length added, for a person of your appearance. You are young, and appear to be not ill-educated; with a figure and demeanour too, that are not likely to mar your other recommendations. The unfortunate foreigner, to whom your letter alludes, was strongly recommended to my patronage and protection; and though you, sir, have made no claim to the same, I voluntarily offer them to you. If you can devise any means, that are acceptable to the spirit which you appear to possess, by which I can render you a service, I hope, sir, you will command it.

There was a plain, yet polite frankness in his lordship's manner, as well

as his remark ,that counteracted Ned's pride, and disposed him to cultivate an acquaintance which invited him so agreeably to his own feelings. He politely thanked his lordship for the offer of his services, but hesitated how further to reply. His lordship arose, and begged him to take his leisure in consideration.—If our hero would favor him with his name, general orders should be left for his admission. Miss Berrington would do the honors of the house, if he were absent. Ned renewed his thanks, and was retiring. Lord Berrington politely accompanied him to the door. Miss Berrington arose as he withdrew; a slight curtsey flatteringly indicated her respect for him, and her obedience to her father. As Ned recrossed the hall, the footman again waited on him to the door. An obsequious simper bespoke his expectations; but the opened door disclosed

a decrepid old woman, begging alms. Ned again held the bribe. The footman was making his last bow, when Ned slid the half-crown into the hand of the old woman, and inclining his body in acknowledgment of the politeness of his powdered friend, withdrew from the thanks of the one, and the open eyes of the other.

CHAPTER II.

———— See that your cause be just,
And then, though death your daring purpose cross,
That cause defend.

WHEN Ned arrived at the inn, he sat down to analize the character of Lord Berrington.—He is an honor to his nation, he at length ejaculated to himself. From the heights of independent and elegant life, he contemplates and aids at his leisure, the progress of industry and the operations of mind. —Yes, I will avail myself of his services and his friendship. In commu-

nicating with his own mind, Ned had determined on a voyage to some of the British colonies. He had golden dreams of what his knowledge and qualifications might effect; his hopes, always ardent, eclipsed the intrusions of danger or difficulty, and he had scarce a conception of circumstances that could rebuke his courage, or repress his spirit of adventure.

In the course of the evening, Ned strayed out with a view of throwing himself accidentally among some public company, where, from the mixture of characters commonly assembled, an acute observer may see so many deputations from different corners of society, proclaiming the prominent intelligence of the day. Ned, however, was fated to be the slave of impetuous feelings; unchastised by experience, and unrestrained by habits of caution.

Pursuing his purpose, he soon found himself in the miscellany of a coffee-room; not aware that he had over-stepped the etiquette of introduction. His conciliating manners, however, procured him a gracious attention, and the spirit of accommodation that is generally manifested towards strangers, soon put him entirely at his ease. Ned now perceived, that he was among a nest of those free-thinkers, who believe every other country to be more free and happy than their own. There was one gentleman in the room that appeared to turn an evil eye on him. He was an officer, of meagre and shrewd aspect, and, sitting near to Ned, though addressing himself to another person, seemed to utter opinions that were in studied opposition to those which had dropt from our hero. After eyeing this evil-disposed person for some time, Ned,

among others, drank his health. His courtesy however was not noticed, and Ned again examined him with his eye. A plain dressed man who sat next to our hero, and who had observed his intention, whispered him, that the person he was noticing, was a gentleman that had seen better days; and who, having now *nothing but the pride of birth* to separate him from the vulgar line of men, seem disposed to make the most of that. Ned's contempt struggled with his pity, and he felt an unconquerable inclination to oblige this bit of proud flesh to notice him. But why have *I* so strongly excited his dislike? said Ned, to the gentleman who gave him this information.

Because you are a *stranger*, replied the gentleman. He is afraid that, if his behaviour were like that of people in

general, he might be mistaken for a common person. He then whispered some further particulars appertaining to the cause of the gentleman's ill-fortune and ill-humour.

The conversation turned on the conduct of a certain very celebrated personage. Ned's whispering friend now told him, that if he said any thing in favor of the celebrated person in question, that the *piece of pride* at his elbow, would challenge him.

Challenge me? Challenge a man for defending his Prince! said Ned, in a voice, elevated, as it were, by instinct.

Every tongue was arrested, and every eye was turned upon Ned. He was aware of the attention that he excited, and waited in silence for what might follow.

Pray young man, do you ever read? said Ned's evil genius the officer, in a low and sarcastic tone.

The blood ran tingling through Ned's frame, but he suppressed his feelings, and said, "Yes, sir; I have read of such beings as you, but never before believed that they really existed."

A mingled noise of murmur and approbation succeeded this reply. The officer, who had been so severely cut by Ned's remark, arose and began a vehement and angry speech. He first noticed the rude and ungentlemanly intrusion of a *boyish stranger*; his attempt to prescribe opinion to the experience and ability of the room, and the insolent reply to himself. He then dilated on the character of the celebrated personage in question; he quoted paper after paper, vice after vice, and

extravagance after extravagance, till it appeared that all the sins and vices of the world had met, as by proclamation, to give, in one character, an instance of complete depravity. Ned, betwixt rage and contempt, heard the speaker out, and arising immediately as he had concluded, explained away, in cool and gentlemanly language, every thing that related to himself. "On the subject of my appearance here," gentlemen, said he, "and my conduct, you have found me calm and conciliating. But in respect to the theme that is to follow," continued he, raising his voice, "I shall throw myself upon the honour and nature of the subject, and speak as I feel. I know not exactly who I am among, and must take the chance of your having the honor to hear two sides of a question. Politeness must give way to truth; I yield myself to the cause that has in-

duced me to rise. You appear to meet for the purposes of political intelligence, and when I look over your papers, I find them all of one character: assertion, most impudent and unfounded, forms the lying feature of every sentence. Slander and sedition mix and melt in every column; alternately following each other, in disgusting detail, from the title-page to the imprint. These, gentlemen, are but so many melancholy proofs of the political liberty which you at once enjoy and abuse. But leaving the licentiousness of the press, gentlemen, I would direct your attention to this slanderous caitiff here; who wears the livery, and eats the bread of the Royal service he would destroy. It is somewhat galling to the pride, and painful to the honorable feelings of an Englishman, to [illegible] in the free and happy society [illegible]

tron and protector. It is like proclaiming the light of heaven to those, who, dazzled by its splendor, would persuade themselves that they were in the dark. But feeble as must be such a cavilling synod as this, and solitary as I am certain it is, even in this mighty and magnificent town, I must not prove such a traitor to my own feelings, as to let the strictures of this worst of traitors, because he wears the costume of a friend, pass in silence. It is a subject that is separate and distinct to any that can apply to you gentlemen, generally. To *you* I can cede the excuse of prejudices and passions gradually contracted and prepossessed. But this declaimer appears to be the proud and conscious necleus of sedition and slander; they are the elements in which he lives. 'Tis his to distribute to the pampered and diseased [illegible]

ments of faction; 'tis his to let himself out as the agent of those who deal in disaffection and discontent, as articles of demand; to point out to the enquiring mind the different efforts of government, in the light only of the mischievous wheels of the systematic and compact machinery of plunder. Did you know, gentlemen, the sources of the slanders which you have heard, and which you are in the habit of reading; could you see the authors of them, stript of the respect and security which distance and ignorance afford, you would not only excuse the warm and hasty manner which I have betrayed on this occasion, but approve and emulate the principles on which I have acted."

Ned was now interrupted by his opponent the officer suddenly arising,

He appeared to beckon to a gentleman of the company, and directly left the room. A mysterious whisper seemed to occupy the company on this occasion. The gentleman who had previously addressed our hero, now told him that he would be obliged either to fight or suffer some marked indignity from the officer he had provoked. From an indifference of life, said he, or some other cause, he is continually involving himself in quarrels. The waiter now entering, presented a note to Ned, and waited for an answer. Ned opened it and read as follows:

"If you are not a coward, follow the bearer *immediately* to the sea shore."

Ned's eye had scarce traced this brief message ere he arose, as though mechanically, to obey its call.

It was a clear moonlight night, and as our hero accompanied his conductor, (who kept close to his side) thro' the busy crowds that were passing and repassing around him, he had leisure to think on the nature of the enterprize on which he was going. The tide of thought immediately turned full upon the object closest to his heart. In his fancy he saw the earth passing away from his sight for ever; but *on that earth* he saw nobody but Helen,—Helen distressed—in tears—& a sigh escaped the struggling spirit of honor. He stopt a moment, and tearing a leaf from his pocket book, scrawled on it a few hasty lines; directing, in case of his death, for it to be forwarded as addressed. His reflections were now diverted by his companion enquiring *if he would call on any gentleman as a second.*

A second? he replied; and the solitariness of his fate pressed heavily on his mind. I am my own second, said his pride. Lead on.

They were winding along the pebbly shore. Nothing was heard but the gentle ripple of the ebb tide, and the low song of the distant fisherman. Cloudless were the heavens, as though the tranquillity and beauty of nature reigned in studied discountenance of his purpose. One of the hardy tars of Neptune was smoaking a short pipe, and walking idly before them on the beach.

Sailor! God speed you, and success to the British flag, said Ned.

Amen! and good luck to you master, replied the tar.

Good luck! echoed Ned—I do not doubt it. I am going to fight one of the enemies of your Prince.

An enemy! and shan't I bear a hand master? said the tar.

You may go and see fair play, as my friend, said Ned.

The sailor squirted out his spittle, and jirking his pipe into the sea, pulled up his trowsers and followed them.

They now turned a headland and discovered at a short distance the officer and his friend. Touching his hat, the waiter retired. On perceiving the sailor, the looks of the party demanded the cause of his presence.

This is a brave man, and my friend, said Ned. You may look and scowl,

gentlemen, he continued, but I'll answer for his honor, and I don't think it would be prudent in you to doubt his courage.

The pistols were loaded.

The sailor now began to understand the business that he was come upon, and after bestowing a selection of his choicest caths upon their "small calibre," he would insist on taking his stand close to his principal; and prayed fervently for another brace of "poppers" that they might make a kind of broadside of it. The ground being paced, he was at length prevailed upon to take a position about two or three yards to the left, and Ned asked what he was to consider as the precise ground of the quarrel. No answer was returned, notwithstanding the Captain's second was desirous of leading to a

compromise. It was then agreed that, the ground being taken, they should turn round per signal and fire as they list.

The Captain fell; "I am a dead man," he exclaimed. His second now entreated our hero and his friend the tar to make the best use of their departure. Ned, in a remorseful mood, a state of mind as novel as it was painful to him, and careless of the consequences, walked deliberately from the spot. "Enquire for me to-morrow at the ———," said he, to the sailor. The sailor gave a huzza to his victory, and d——d his timbers if he would not follow him through the world.

Ned continued to saunter contemplatively along the strand. What a miserable slave am I, thought he; the sport of passion and prejudice; the

worst of passions and the worst of prejudice; the tranquillity of my mind, for ever surrendered to the false notions of a vain-glorious world. He took the note from his pocket which he had directed, in case of his death, to be forwarded to his friends. O! Helen! said he,—that this has never reached thine eye, I am happy; for this I am grateful—more grateful than for the preservation of a ——, what am I saying? Shall I add the sin of ingratitude to —— what a wretch am I? But let the future expiate the past. He entered the town, and continued pacing thoughtfully along the streets, unmindful of his direction. He suddenly found himself opposite the door of Lord Berrington, and mechanically stopt. What should I do here, thought he? But there was a desperation in his mind, that impelled him, as though in defiance of himself, to what was un-

usual, and the knocker fell sharply from his hand. His name procured immediate admission, and he was ushered into an elegant parlour. Miss Berrington was alone; she was reading on a sopha, and appeared to be most intently fixed on the subject before her. The announced "Mr. Bentley" scared her attention, and she arose, somewhat surprised and embarrassed, at the abruptness of the visit, and the lateness of the hour. Ned immediately felt the impropriety that he had committed, but there was something in his manner that reassured her, and, slightly curtseying, and colouring, she begged him to take a seat.

Miss Berrington, said he, you are too good to judge harshly of this intrusion, particularly if you were aware of the circumstances, under the influence of which, I am at present placed. Let

a want of respect to you be among the last causes to which my conduct is attributed.

Sir—she replied, I am not forward to condemn *any one.* I do not complain, Sir—my father is ———

I wish to see him, said Ned, yet I know not exactly what I have to desire of him. I am unfortunate and unhappy; I have been provoked to an outrage of all law and decorum. O! Miss Berrington! in what a terrible contrast to the innocent and elegant tranquillity which I have here invaded, reigns the rude chaos of my fate! The tone and temper of my mind is gone. All is uproar and riot; the destructive and ruinous work of one little hour!

I hope sir, said the trembling Miss Berrington, scarce knowing what she

said, that no evil has happened, which the interest or friendship of my father cannot relieve.

The good wishes of you and your father, towards a solitary and friendless orphan, ought to be a sovereign relief for all the woes to which he is liable. But I have sinned, voluntarily and proudly sinned, against all forgiveness.

I hope, sir, continued Miss Berrington, that your feelings have given too strong a colour to your offence.

Listen, and decide, said Ned. At a distance, on the silent strand, pale, and bleeding to death, lies the victim of false honor! Oh! shrink not Miss Berrington, in terror and amazement from the rest. Though you are now affording a shelter to the greatest of criminals, think not that it is my object to

escape justice. He was a villain, but he has expiated his crimes. If ever the tremendous sentence of the law should be read over my offence, let society pronounce and promote its own dissolution. Your father is a just and virtuous man; as the patron of the unhappy, I claim his exertions; *I* will be heard as well as my crime.

O! sir, said Miss Berrington, my father will not be at home before it is late. I know not how to act.

I am a villain, said Ned, for intruding such miseries on your peace. Pity me, and state my case to Lord Berrington. I go to wait the result. Ned immediately bowed, and took his leave.

In the morning, the sailor waited on Ned with the intelligence, that the captain was by no means wounded

dangerously. Ignorant of the probable consequences, he had waited and seen him taken home. The ball was lodged in the muscles of the shoulder, and had been extracted; but he had sworn deadliest enmity against our hero for the future. This news removed a tremendous load from the mind of Ned; of the future he thought not, and with a light heart and cheerful eye, he took his morning's walk.

In the mean time this adventure had got wing. Several members of the coffee-room, who had been frequently piqued at the irritable manners of the captain, had told the story in its true light, and the subject became a general topic of enquiry. But *Ned was missing!* Enquiry could trace him no further than his leaving the sailor in the morning, and the public interest became strongly excited on his account.

His brave and intrepid conduct had received all the embellishment of which it was susceptible. Lord Berrington was first and foremost among his friends, but neither interest nor industry availed. Foul and desperate measures were suspected, but justice had no clue to action.

CHAPTER III.

A short time after this, Mr. Mordent and his family, and Mr. Pelham, arrived in Liverpool, with a view of coasting Wales, and returning by Bristol and Worcester. It was the season for the watering places, and Mr. Mordent was induced to give his assent to the excursion, partly from the considerations of the benefit that he might himself receive, and partly from a hope to divert a kind of general gloom that had stolen imperceptibly on the spirits

of his family. Mr. Pelham had little difficulty in acceding to the general wish that was expressed for his company, for he had few pleasures, but in the interchange of those civilities by which society is endeared to itself.

Assembled at breakfast, the morning after their arrival, Mary was reading one of the newspapers of the town, when she suddenly turned pale, and would have fallen from her chair, had not Mr. Pelham caught her in his arms. When she came a little to herself, she begged pardon, and complained of a dizziness in her head, but said that she was better; and the circumstance passed off without further inquiry. She again took up the paper, and read out several different passages relating to the local concerns of the town. After breakfast, taking Helen's arm, she withdrew to her apartment.

My dear Helen, said she, as soon as they were alone, and throwing her arms about her neck, your sensibility is as sacred to me as my own. Do not be terrified my dear, but our HERO, for he is, and *shall* be ours, *is, or has been in Liverpool!* But that is not all, she continued, in a trembling tone; he has, I am afraid, been cruelly treated.

Oh! say not so, said the trembling Helen, turning pale with anxiety.

But he has met with friends as well as foes, continued Mary, and the interest and admiration that he has excited, are the genuine traces of his character.

A thousand thanks for that, said Helen, kissing her sister's cheek with rapture; his fame shall be as dear to us as his life.

Now string your nerves my dear, said Mary, producing the paper; and the crimson again fled the flushed cheek of hope. You look so monstrous pale, continued Mary, that I dare not proceed.

O! I won't, said Helen; pray go on.

"Whereas ——"

Good Heaven! what a hateful beginning, said Helen.

If I had read it in the breakfast-room, said Mary, I could not have driven your roses more completely.

O! I will love you for ever for your consideration, replied Helen, —— but go on.

"Whereas, the sudden disappearance of an extraordinary youth, of the

name of Bentley, recently engaged in a duel near the —— Point; and his departure taking place, after it was made known to him that the wound of his adversary was not mortal, have given rise to a suspicion, that measures of a violent nature have been had recourse to, to which his sudden absence can alone be attributed. Several gentlemen of some importance in the town, therefore, taking into consideration his brave and patriotic conduct, and the unworthy and disreputable cause of his opponent, do hereby offer a reward of FIFTY GUINEAS, to any person or persons who are enabled to make a discovery of such means as may lead to a knowledge of his present situation. Apply at the office of ———."

Liverpool, ——, ——.

Oh! he is murdered! said Helen.

Let us hope the best, said Mary, though unable to divest herself of the terror which she chid in her sister; I have a kind of superstitious reliance on his fate.

So have I, said Helen, but——

—Your fears receive their most formidable terror from your hopes, added Mary.

After recovering, in some degree, their self-possession, they returned to consult their mother and Mr. Pelham.

The astonishment and grief of Mrs. Mordent, on thisdiscovery, were nearly equal to that of her daughters. Mr. Pelham immediately departed in search of further particulars, to the office, as particularized in the advertisement. From there he was directed for further

information, to Lord Berrington. He accordingly introduced himself to his Lordship, as the friend of Mr. Bentley, and was received in a very gracious manner. His lordship expressed himself in terms of the highest admiration of Ned's conduct, but evidently suffered under very painful apprehensions as to his disappearance. Mr. Pelham asked concerning the character of the gentleman with whom he had quarrelled.

Captain Higgins, is a disappointed and violent man, replied his lordship. He is a distant relation of a certain notorious ex M. P. that has ascribed the fallen fortunes of his family, to the capricious favour of his superiors; and has therefore engaged in the interests of his revenge, every being within the sphere of his influence or controul. Captain Higgins, with a

temper naturally irritable and waspish, has been lessoned in this school of discontent, and exhibits a most melancholy instance of its effects.

His lordship further detailed what other particulars relating to Ned, since his appearance in Liverpool, had come within his knowledge; and expressed himself determined not to relax in his enquiry, till he had traced the foul means which he suspected, to their source. With a similar determination on his mind, and expressing the sense he entertained of his lordship's kindness and benevolence, Mr. Pelham took his leave. On his return, he called for the sailor, to whom his lordship had referred him, but not finding him at home, he left orders for him to wait on him at his inn, during the evening.

Mr. Mordent, as yet, had been told nothing of the affair.

"Mary," said Mr. Mordent, as he was sitting with his two daughters, and after he had been ruminating for a considerable time in silence, "I don't wish to be thought unkind to you, but I wish you would leave us a little, for I have something particular to say to Helen,"—and Mary, immediately, with the greatest possible good humour, tripped out of the room.

That girl is so good, said Mr. Mordent, that I have a great mind to call her back again.

O! pray do, said Helen, and let me go and tell her. No, I won't, he continued, for that would be letting her know how much I am pleased with her.

And would not that be an encouragement for her to continue to please you? said Helen.

Why it might, Helen, but don't say any more, for, I don't know why, but I had rather not. Helen said no more.

"And now, Helen, my dear, do you know what I have been thinking of?" he continued. Helen smiled and said no. "I have been thinking of poor Ned, you know, who left us." Helen sighed, and bent her eyes on the ground. It was the first time that her father had mentioned his name since his departure; and she was surprised and pleased to hear him spoken of, in a tone somewhat approaching to kindness. Mr. Mordent continued. "I don't think that he had any thing to do with that queer old man, after all. He might mean well, but you know, I

did every thing for the best." Helen durst not trust her voice, or she would have assented to the goodness of his intentions. "He has seen a great many ups and downs in the world, considering he is so young," continued he, musingly, and as though discoursing with himself, rather than another person, "and it is a hard thing to be cast on the wide world without a single friend in it."

He is not without friends, I hope, said Helen, with a sigh. Mr. Mordent looked at her as though he would enquire who they were.

You would not see him want, sir, she continued. Don't you remember, father, the night, when, from the top of the book-case, he arrested the sword that was lifted to ——

Yes, he replied, in a smothered tone of remorse.

It would be very hard indeed, she added, if he were ever to *want*, and we knew of it, for ——

He shall never want, continued Mr. Mordent, with considerable firmness in his manner, and quite subdued by his own sensations, while I have a ——

Alas! sighed Helen, it is too late; he perhaps does not live to profit —-- Here her voice faultered and she stopt. Wishing, however, to avail herself of the present disposition of her father, she fetched the paper containing the advertisement, and gave it him to read. While he was reading it, Mr. Pelham returned, and Helen ran to inform him of her having communicated the circumstance to her father. The family accordingly all met in discussion on this subject, and Mr. Pelham related

the particulars that he had learnt from Lord Berrington, and the polite and kind manner in which that nobleman had offered his services in prosecuting the enquiry.

He was always a very unaccountable young man, said Mr. Mordent, for if ever I wanted any thing done, which I told him that I thought he could not effect, *he was sure to do it!*

If you had always followed your own judgment, my dear, said Mrs. Mordent, instead of the judgment of others, we should never have lost him.

Flattered and consoled by this view of his conduct, Mr. Mordent readily assented to such an opinion of the case. He then added, that "he was very glad that there was no subject now which they could not all talk together upon."

And may we be now allowed, said Mary, in her own arch manner, ever to mention the name of Mr. Wilkins?

You may, replied Mr. Mordent, because I know that he is a favourite of yours.

Why he always *was* now, asserted Mary, as though she would deny the significant smiles of Helen and her mother, for I never saw him in my life, without longing to request a very *particular favor* of him.

That, I presume, was the favor of his absence, said Mr. Mordent, laughing at his own acuteness.

If *you* persist in forcing such an understanding on what I have said, added Mary, I will not be so undutiful as to complain.

Mr. Mordent was pleased and gratified to find himself on a more cordial footing with himself as well as his family; and, as usual, his most *expressive* way of indicating his good humour, was in *opening his purse.* Mrs. Mordent knew the improved, and improving state of her husband's finances, and wished, for the sake of her daughters, as well as the convenience of their present tour, that a travelling chariot should be purchased, by which they might be enabled to travel more *en famille.* She had formerly *glanced* at this indulgence, but no more. Mr. Mordent left the room in one of his best humours, and the youthful minds of Helen and Mary were busied in conjecturing the result. I don't know any thing that we want, said Mary, but a kind of squire, that would never be tired in walking about with us, and admiring the hills, and the vallies, and the rocks, and the seas, ——

If his admiration stopt there, it would be all very well, said Mr. Pelham.

A message was now brought to Mrs. Mordent, and Mr. Pelham, desiring their company at No. 2, —— street; they accordingly departed with the messenger. Immediately after their departure, the waiter announced THE SAILOR to the ladies. O! tell him to come in, said Helen. The tar in a few minutes made his entrance. He was as rough and rude as the ocean that he rode; in figure, a tall and lanky veteran, and in his coarse jacket, and long and large blue trowsers, cut a most formidable appearance. The elements had not beaten against his face in vain, for he looked as though all the winds of Heaven could neither disturb nor discountenance him. His firm and steady eye bespoke the habitual fortitude of his mind, and wore

an accordant sympathy with his frame. He contemplated the events and dangers on shore, but as the ripple of the seas, that could excite in his mind neither interest nor fear. The girls looked at him till they were almost terrified at his sight.

Mary at length asked, if he were the brave man that was along with Mr. Bentley at the duel.

Not close *along-side* of him, Miss; I was warned off, and kept in the *offing*, as one may say.

He was not wounded at all, I believe, said Helen.

I hardly thinks he either knew or cared whether he was or not, Miss.

Was he so indifferent? added Helen.

He was just a man to my mind, Miss; he din'nt care to fight, and would not give a d——n to let it alone.

Did he leave any commands with you, said Mary, in case he fell?

No, Miss; but the servant who came with him, said he wrote a little bit of a letter, on his knee, and put it in his pocket.

He did not say then *who it was for*, said Helen.

The tar caught the timid glance of her eye, and marked the slight suffusion of her cheek; and replied, in his significant way, "No, Miss; but mayhappen it was for his sweet-heart."

A deeper colour stole on the varying cheek of Helen, and Mary diverted the attention of the gazing tar, by

praising his intrepidity; she told him that if ever Mr. Bentley were found, he should find in him a friend as long as he lived. The sailor let loose his most favourite oath, and only prayed that he had just such a man for his captain. Several questions were now asked concerning the last time that he saw Ned; but the tar had here no sources of satisfaction. Helen rang the bell, and ordered that the tar might retire and drink his favourite grog, till the return of Mr. Mordent, and Mr. Pelham.

How much is he to have? asked the waiter.

As much as he likes, said Helen.

Mr. and Mrs. Mordent, and Mr. Pelham, now returned; the chariot had been purchased, and the girls were to

be agreeably surprised in a day or two, by its appearance.

The sailor was now re-examined, but the enquiry led to no knowledge that threw any light on the cause or means of Ned's absence. Agreeably, however, to the petition of Mrs. Mordent and her daughters, the tar, for the present, was retained in the service of the family.

Helen and Mary were one day walking on the beach, with the sailor, who accompanied them as a guide. The weather was remarkably fine, and swarms of small boats were seen skimming across the river to the opposite coast. They asked the sailor how far it was, and how long they were in going across; and the sailor favouring their inclination, they at length agreed to his procuring a *large* boat, with a

view to cross the river and return. The world would call this an impropriety, said Mary. The "conscious mind," my dear, said Helen;—you know the rest. The little sail was soon hoisted, and they drove delightfully before a gentle wind. The novelty of the scene inspired new and pleasant sensations, and every thing was charming, and glorious, and sublime! Landed on the Cheshire coast, they were induced to take a walk towards the light-house, to see the broad and immense view of an open sea. In the mean time the boatmen, according to their request, were permitted to search for *other jobs*, but were ordered to return in the course of an hour. Our heroines continued, however, to stroll in delightful reverie, absorbed in thought, by the variety and interesting nature of the scene, till the mild and gentle approach of evening warned

them of the time. The shades of night were falling gradually round them as they approached the shore, on which a rougher surf was dashing its whitening waters. The boatmen who brought them, had just sailed, after waiting for them till they despaired of their return. Mary trembled, as she beheld the swell of the river, and the distant boats, now sinking behind the waves, and now rising in view, half-immersed amid the boisterous element. How imprudent have we been, Helen, she sighed; but any thing in which you have acquiesced, I have always considered as right. Courage, my dear, said Helen, we must now make the best of it; you see these people who are accustomed to such scenes, behold them with indifference. But Helen's cheek turned pale as she spoke, when her eye caught the rising spray as it scattered its foam upon the shore.

Their guide, the jolly tar, as though the energies of his mind could be only called into action by difficulties, was here and there and every where, praying, swearing, and intreating in the same breath. He knew that his messmates who brought him would return, though they cut through mountains of waters. "They'll bring the *small pleasure sloop*, Miss," said he, perceiving the fears of his fair travellers; bless you Miss, why them and I have sung in a sea that would bring all these snivelling lubbers on their knees. Several people had now arrived from different parts of the country, and were waiting in trembling anxiety for the next hoy. At length two vessels were seen, by the aid of a rising moon and the faint twilight, to put from shore. The tall mast of the one was distinctly visible; now buoyant on the swell, and now as though resting length-ways

on the wave. The other was occasionally perceptible, like a speck on the ruffled waters. Helen and Mary were endeavouring to string one anothers nerves, for the voyage. "That's them," said the sailor, with his eye fixed on the approaching vessel, "its the sloop, and shall take nobody but ourselves;" (the company having now become very numerous)—no other vessel was seen to cross, as the swell appeared every minute to increase. Several ladies and gentlemen petitioned for a seat in the sloop that was approaching for our heroines, but the tar cried in the gruff voice that he always assumed towards strangers, "that as they could not safely take 'em all, they had better all stay and keep one another company for the night." Helen and Mary interfered, and twelve different ladies and gentlemen were permitted to accompany them; the remainder being

no more than what might be accommodated in the hoy. The gallant tar handed his "noble ladies," as he occasionally called them, into the vessel first, and would allow nobody else to enter till they were comfortably seated in the best place. The rest of the company were then admitted, and the vessel soon felt her light canvass and bore away. When towards the middle of the river, the swell had a terrific appearance. The rough protector of Helen and Mary, kept close by their side and cheered their courage by his remarks. "Bless you, my lady, why this is a ripple. Look-ye, we have passed the deeps. See Miss, here's the frigate at anchor; it does not feel such a sea as this. I've seen that frigate, when there was not a timber in her that did not crack again, and the sea roared round her in good earnest; these are only the waves of a puddle."

They now approached the shore, and terror gave way to a delight that a sense of danger escaped can only confer. What is your name, besides Ben? said Mary, to the gallant and garrulous tar.

Ben Cheerly, my lady.

Ben Cheerly is a brave fellow, replied Mary, and here's a trifle for him and his messmates to be merry with. I shall not suffer you to be stingy, Miss, continued Mary, addressing her sister, so I must beg you to give him the same. Helen doubled the sum, and said as she gave it him, "you will consider this as the gift of our gallant friend, whom you accompanied in the hour of danger, and at a time when he had no other friend here but yourself."

The tar spoke his good wishes in an oath that could not be called *wicked,* for it gave a peculiarly strong and expressive colour to his gratitude.

As the vessel approached the steps of the quay, some sailors jumped into the river to facilitate the means of landing, by keeping the vessel steady.

An elderly man stood on the side next the land, and gave Mary his hand as she stept on shore. She thought he pressed it as she sprang from his hold, and turning to observe him she met the brilliant eyes of *the mysterious old man* who had caused her family so much terror. She caught hold of Helen's arm, or she would have fallen. See, Helen, she cried ; but as she spoke he sprang on the shore, and darting thro' the crowd, immediately disappeared.

Under their rough escort, they now left the shore, ruminating on this mysterious appearance. On the arrival at their inn, where considerable fears had been excited on their account, their voyage was noticed only as it led to this event. Conjecture and anxiety increased, but the candid habits of intercourse to which the family had pledged itself, considerably lightened the evils which they could not remove.

CHAPTER IV.

As Mary sat at breakfast, the next morning, all the different mysterious circumstances relating to the old man, passed in rapid and confused succession through her mind; and to divert the painful train of thought, she took up the morning paper. The first thing that caught her eye, was her own name, and the following *Canzonet.*

TO MARY.

I.

Mary, when the stormy night
Howls around, unfelt by thee,
Reckless of the tempest's might,
Wakes the eye of *Somebody*:

II.

Reckless, though on ocean tost,
Save when hope, that clings to thee,
Though by hapless fortune cross'd,
Yields a charm to *Somebody*.

III.

A morn of brighter hope may glow,
And thou its dawning light shalt see;
Though yet the darkling cloud may throw
Its mystic shade on *Somebody*.

IV.

A flatt'ring world may prove unkind,
And friends thy falling fortunes flee;
But guard thy innocence, and find
No thankless heart in *Somebody*.

This extraordinary lover of mine, said Mary, in a more cheerful tone,

and presenting the paper to her mother, is not quite so terrifying in poetry as prose. The verses were read and handed round, and the mild, tho' still mysterious character of them, had a tendency to soften the painfulness of apprehension.

The waiter now entering, delivered a letter which had been left by Lord Berrington's footman. It enclosed a letter from Ned Bentley, addressed to his lordship, and contained his lordship's congratulations on the discovery. Mr. Pelham was called upon to be the reader.

COPY.

H. M. S. ———

Lat. 45. n. lon. 5. E. *off Ferro.*

Having walked a considerable way down shore, the morning after my

rencontre with Capt. ———, I was overtaken by two sailors, one of whom asked in a rank Irish accent, several ordinary questions, relating to the time of day, &c. From what he said to his companion, who made no reply, I found that they were going in a boat that was at a small distance, a few miles coastways. Half-inclined, and half-invited, I agreed to go with them. There being only two oars, which were worked by the sailors, I sat in idle contemplation of the scene, unmindful of the direction which we made, till I was struck with the distance at which we had left the shore. This I observed to the Irishman, but was diverted from immediately noticing it further, by his replying that we were crossing to an arm of land. Owing to the interchange of a glance that I caught passing between my two

conductors, a suspicion of their purpose darted across my mind.

I demanded to know where they were going.

Och! to see a bit of a *tinder* frind of ours, said the Irishman.

A kind of double meaning in his voice, and the word *tender* served to confirm my suspicions. I remonstrated with firmness, with a view to ascertain the certainty of their intention. I had observed our direction to be in line with a *three-master* that lay at a distance, and thither the Irishman confessed himself to be going. "The King wanted men, and he was the King's frind." My mind revolted against a quiet acquiescence in this nefarious design, and I determined on desperate means. The other sailor was

a Dutchman, and possessed all the *unwieldliness* of his nation. They sat with their faces towards me, and kept a constant eye on my conduct. A tremendous *shelala* lay under the seat of the Irishman. Pretending to make the weight of the boat more level, I passed them, and went to the stern. The Irishman said nothing, but removed his *frind,* (the shelala) as he called it. I was now seated behind them; the boat had no sail, the sea *roughened,* and with only two oars we made but little way. The Dutchman seemed to leave every thing to the Irishman, and sat in great *nonchalance* at his oar, heeding nothing but the wave that sometimes showered its spray in his pipe. I took my station as near to him as I could without causing suspicion, and by a slight check of my hand slipped his oar into the sea. Before the Irishman could be aware of

this, I laid hold of his, and after a sharp wrestle, *that* went overboard likewise. "Now my good fellows," said I, "we have all one common danger to combat; let us therefore assist one another. I have only changed my guide; preferring that of Providence to you. The danger however was greater than I was aware of; for the *tide was on the ebb*. The Irishman swore,—the Dutchman put down his pipe; and both were greatly alarmed. We were borne rapidly away by the tide, and soon lost sight both of land and vessels. The evening was far advanced and a heavy rolling sea beat about us most unmercifully! Fortunately, however, as night was setting fast in upon us, and after several hours of great anxiety, we perceived, through a hazy atmosphere, a vessel under sail at no great distance. This however would have been of little service to us, had they not in a

short time seen us. We were fetched on board, and my two companions, being sailors, were found to be of considerable service. The vessel on which we are aboard, is a frigate, carrying thirty guns. The captain is in an ill state of health, and has not yet been able to attend to a statement of my case. We are bound for some of our distant settlements, and are not allowed to put in any port (unless by necessity) till some object is accomplished.

I had written the above account with a view to forward it to your lordship the first opportunity. *This was due to the kind interest which your lordship has taken in my welfare.* Speaking an American, bound to Liverpool, I with some difficulty have made interest to get this sent on board. Who my *frind* the Irishman has been employed by, he professes that he cannot

tell; he was offered ten guineas on producing a certificate of my being lodged on board the tender lying off the north coast. I was described to him as a sailor in disguise, and a swindler. There is no doubt of Capt. —— and his friends being deeply implicated in the affair. With a due sense of your lordship's friendship,

I have the honor to be, &c.

E. BENTLEY.

To Lord Berrington.

A short pause succeeded the conclusion of the letter, as though each waited to hear the other speak. I admire his intrepidity, at length said Mary; and I his *trust in Providence,* said Mrs. Mordent. He has a rash and daring spirit, said Mr. Pelham, that loves to woo danger in whatever form it appears. He is a very strange young fellow to be sure, cried Mr. Mordent.

Nay, Helen, said Mary, let us have your opinion among the rest.

I fear, said Helen, that is, I think—that ———

——— *He is a very strange young fellow too,* added Mary.

So is *somebody* else, said Helen, smiling.

O! said Mary, though with spirits ebbing back to her heart, he is not half so frightful as he used to be; he has left off talking about *demons* and *darkness,* and if it were not for that old man with his bright eyes, crossing one every now and then, I should soon forget him entirely.

Mr. Pelham, previous to the departure of the family from Liverpool,

waited on Lord Berrington to enquire respecting the destination of the vessel on which Ned was aboard. His lordship lamented that it was not in his power to give him any information on the subject, and that nothing could be done to improve the situation of our hero, till something more was known relating to it. He requested Mr. Pelham to leave his address, that, in case of further particulars being known, they might be forwarded to him.

In a few mornings after, the new travelling chariot and four horses were at the door. The weather being fine, Helen and Mary begged to ride on the dickey, that they might *see* the new purchase. Ben Cheerly stood with his hat in his hand as they departed, and waving it in the air, hailed them as long as they were in sight.

CHAPTER V.

Lord Berrington was an only son, and succeeded to the immense property of his father at an early period of life. At the age of thirty he had run the gauntlet of all the follies of the time, and his character, naturally prone to the chaster enjoyments of life, gradually developed its bias, as the tedious round of fashion began to pall in repetition. He married a lady who had every thing but wealth and title to recommend her, and who, in giving

birth to a daughter, bid adieu to this world for ever! The Hon. Miss Berrington inherited all the graces and virtues of her mother, though no mother's partial hand tendered its aid to fashion her infant mind. With the best instructors, and under the superintending and anxious cares of a father, she made a rapid progress in all the elegant accomplishments of her sex. A kind of religious deference which she paid to the taste and judgment of her only parent, had produced such an effect on her character, as to have prevented even her thoughts or desires from straying beyond the boundary of his observation; her acquaintance, therefore, had hitherto been confined to the narrow circle of Lord Berrington's most intimate friends. Among the most distinguished of these may be placed, *Sir Hubert Roland*, a young and accomplished baronet. To

a sound understanding, and a taste rather literary than not, he added a lively fancy, and the confident and easy manners of a man of the world. It so happened, that Sir Hubert made his first appearance at Lord Berrington's, after a short absence from town, as Mr. Pelham took his leave. "That man has a very extraordinary countenance," said Sir Hubert, as he flung himself on the sopha, by the side of Miss Berrington.

Then his countenance indexes his mind, said Lord Berrington. He has the habit, without being guilty of any seeming unpoliteness, or vulgarity, of speaking broadly on his subject; or, otherwise, of throwing a remarkably strong light on his meaning, by a peculiar adaption of phrase.

That denotes a genius, said Sir Hubert, that has neither been weakened

by polish, nor divided by the ordinary multiplicity of pursuit.

Well defined, said his lordship. His lordship then related the subject appertaining to his visit; with which Sir Hubert was partially acquainted. Mr. Pelham, I believe, continued he, is accompanied by a family of the name of Mordent, which I understand has to boast of two of the most elegant girls,——

Elegant! said Sir Hubert; my lord, I beg your pardon, and Miss Berrington you will excuse me,—*I have seen them*, and, with deference to your lordship can do them more justice. I would give the world, Miss Berrington, for you to be acquainted with them, though I have scarcely ever spoken to them in my life. I met with them on the other side of the river;

and finding that they were waiting for a vessel which had been ordered for them, I professed to be coming to Liverpool, though it had not been my intention to come till the next day, and petitioned for a seat with them. Had you seen with what a polite propriety, neither courting notice, nor shunning it, with which they acceded to that and several other requests of the kind, you would have memorandumed their manners for example. Their protector was a rough and hardy tar, who, "albeit unused to the bending mood," appeared to have been subdued even into politeness in their service, and paid them the homage of a deity. They stood arm in arm on the deck, with their mantles folded gracefully round them to repel a shrewd evening wind, which, as tho' in amorous dalliance, hung enamoured in their drapery, and whistled in lan-

guishing cadences around them. The chaste moonlight, as though in acknowledgment of a kindred fire, slept in the heavenly lustre of their eyes, and shed about them a pale and virgin light.—The rough guide beside them, threw his hungry and defying eyes around, as though he would have loved to challenge death in their defence, and growled, even as the rude sea itself approached them. Methought he looked like the lion at the feet of Britannia, serenely terrible, and guarding with a lynx's eye his genius and his charge. The rough and turbulent ocean, as though he had within himself a soul, and struggled with his passion, heaved his rude waves in salutation of their beauty, and singing round the vessel's stern, roared its reluctant leave.—— Pity, if you cannot pardon my ecstacies, Miss Berrington, but it was impossible to see them and not fancy the

fascinating influence of their presence to create a consciousness where it existed not before.

I am sure, Sir Hubert, said Miss Berrington, that I cannot doubt the power of their charms, for they have created in you an absolute poetical ability.

I never heard you so eloquent before, said Lord Berrington, but your style has too much of the blank-verse *halt* in it; it is a kind of prancing prose, and if ever you publish, you will be in danger of getting dismounted at the critical tournaments, by those celebrated knights, the Messrs. Monthly and British.

O! I hate all reviewers, said Sir Hubert; but to return to my two girls of sixteen, for they could not be any older: I enquired their names of the

sailor, and followed at a distance, to see that they reached their inn in safety. Since that time, I have exhausted invention to devise means of knowing more of them.

You would marry them *both* I suppose, said Miss Berrington, for you seem to have made no choice.

I should like for the society of both to be placed within the sphere of my friends, replied Sir Hubert, for they would spread a charm round an acquaintance, which their wit would preserve when their beauty was gone.

Lord Berrington mentioned the address of Mr. Pelham, which had been left by him; Sir Hubert copied it with a pleasure which he could not disguise, and soon after took his leave.

I once thought, my dear, said Lord Berrington to his daughter, that our friend might have disclosed taste enough to appreciate yours.

My dear father, she replied, you know that a long and jocular acquaintance like ours, is unfavorable to the developement of nicer affections.—Where the sun rises once in every twenty-four hours, we think little of his approach. But to the Icelander in his house of earth, after his long and tedious night, even the twilight of his appearance is hailed with fervour and devotion.

I believe you are right, my dear, said Lord Berrington, with a sigh. I intend that you and I shall make the tour of our island together, he continued; and next week we commence our journey southwards.

Pleasure brightened the eyes of his fair daughter, and she began, in fancy, already to prepare for the delightful excursion.

CHAPTER VI.

—— Where griesly night, with visage deadly sad,
That Phœbus' cheerful face durst never view,
All in a foul black pitchy mantle clad,
* * * * * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * * * * *
Before her door her iron chariot stood,
Already harnessed for journey new ;
And coal-black steeds, yborn of hellish brood,
* * * * * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * * * * *
The wakeful dogs did never cease to bay,
As giving warning of th' unusual sound
With which her iron wheels did them affray,
And her dark griesly look them much dismay.
The messenger of death, the ghastly owl,
With dreary shrieks did also her bewray ;
And hungry wolves continually did howl
At her abhorred face, so filthy and so foul.

SPENCER.

The sun was set ; the wind was high, and dark clouds were passing in hurrying succession across the heavens :

The pale lustre of the moon broke in feeble and dissipated light on the dusky road, and the faint scintillation of the stars, like distant hopes, played, occasionally, amid the darkened view,—as a weary traveller pursued with hastening and anxious steps, his journey's end. The frosty evening air had mingled the red and the blue in his cheek; and the doubtful road distracted the traveller's mind. Weary, and waywworn, and cold, he directed his eye to heaven, but the frowning clouds, as though forbidding his appeal, hung in thick voluminous drapery around him, and sent a sensation of despair to his heart. Though feeble and faultering, he continued to pursue his track, till the windings and irregularity of the way convinced him that he had departed from the main road. But the hopes of his present path leading more directly to some house, awhile be-

guiled his labours. At distant periods he thought he heard something like the firing of a gun. Mountainous and rocky was his way, and to his fearful fancy, the murmurings of the wind appeared to mix with the roar of waters. As he continued, he could at length distinguish the distant singing of the ocean surf, as it broke on the shelving shore; the moon was setting, and darkness, deep as the ocean caves, hung over the world. Despair was in his heart, and exhaustion was pressing him to the earth, when a distant light, feeble as the socket's dying flame, shot hope into his breast. After a degree of toil and labour which, but for the expectation of relief, would have closed his eyes in the impenetrable darkness of death, he reached a neat and small mansion, round which the sea appeared to roar in nearly all directions. He entered the doors, and

not immediately perceiving anybody, he called aloud on its inhabitants. No answer was returned, and he raised his voice, which, penetrating to the rocks round the dwelling, was answered only by its own dismal reverberations. Perceiving a light through an unclosed door, he opened it. It was a comfortable parlour; a table was spread, on which the remains of a supper was left; a lighted candle was in the room, and a good fire added its cheerful influence to the other accommodations. Every thing indicated its recent occupation. Our traveller was a man who stood not reproachless in his own mind, and a superstitious sense of the loneliness of his situation preyed on his spirits. He stirred up the fire, as though to persuade himself of his own courage, and waited half in hope, and half fearful, of somebody making their appearance. Sitting in silence and in

thought, only oppressed him the more, and he took hold of a candle, and scarce knowing how to employ himself, examined the different pictures of the room. The first to which he directed his attention, was the representation of a tiger behind a brake, in the act of springing on the unwary traveller. The next exhibited a lurking robber with his pistol, waiting the approach of his prey. Another disclosed the dark assassin with his dagger, drawing the curtains of his victim's bed. These were subjects not calculated to dispel his terrors, and he returned to the fire. Before him was a picture that appeared to be of a different character, and he lifted the light to observe it. It was apparently the representation of a room, and as his eye wandered over it, he was struck with the resemblance it bore to the room in which he then was. He

strained his eyes to trace the particulars. There was the same large bow-window at the end; the same pictures in miniature; the sofa was in the same situation, and the whole appeared an exact counterpart of the place. But what struck with the most terror on his attention, was the figure of a man at the fire, regarding the same picture that he was then looking at! He endeavoured to shake off his creeping sensations and observe it further; but a strange horror came over him as he perceived the door, which was thrown into the shade, half open, and the form of a ruffian with a sword, as tho' in the act of entering! He turned his eyes in terror from the picture, as though he expected to encounter a similar appearance, and, as he bent them on the door, the same figure appeared to ride upon his sight! A glassy dizziness came over his vision, and he fell senseless on the floor!

When our traveller came to his senses, he found himself surrounded by several different people, who had been employed in the humane offices of his recovery. He felt that he was among human beings, and the first terrors of his restoration, soon subsided; and in the kind and hospitable treatment he received, he soon forgot both his weariness and his fears. On his explaining the cause of his distress, the pictures were ordered to be taken down. "They are the designs of a young person that once spent a part of the summer here," said an elderly lady; "and that terrible picture of this room, has frightened many people before; but is very much admired for its design."

Mrs. Hanson, the mistress of the dwelling, was a woman of humane and benevolent feelings. With the sum

for which she hired a few of her apartments for about three months in the year, together with the produce of an acre or two of land, she contrived to make a comfortable living. The signals of a vessel in distress off the coast, had called her little family, consisting of herself, an aged father, and a female domestic, to the beach; and in their absence, the traveller had arrived. They had no sooner reached the shore than they heard the distant calls of some one on land, and in scarce less fears than the traveller himself, they had returned. The old man entering the parlour, as the traveller turned his eyes from the picture, completed the climax of his terrors.

As soon as our traveller had refreshed himself, they all repaired to the beach, to learn the fate of the vessel. A light was hung on her mast, and she conti-

nued firing at intervals. Darkness enveloped the heavens, and a strong gale blew from the sea. Mrs. Hanson had procured a light to be fastened on the side of a rock, as a beacon, in case they had recourse to their boat. Another light was carried by the servant, and they waited in the most distressing anxiety, as witnesses of misery and distress which they could not relieve. The firing at length ceased, and the light was no longer visible. "Poor wretches," said Mrs. Hanson, "their sufferings will soon be over." A horrible silence succeeded; the sea appeared to have closed over the hapless crew, and its waters rolled on as before. The traveller was a stout and healthy man, though toil for awhile had relaxed his sinews. He appeared absorbed in thought, and kept his eyes fixed on the heavy waters. He at length enquired if there were a boat

within any tolerable distance. One was pointed out to him that was anchored at a small distance on the sands, but it was so light that he was advised not to venture. "It matters not," he exclaimed, with a kind of terrible determination in his manner. The approaching waters soon enabled him to float it. He fastened a light at the stern, and as he left the shore, he said to Mrs. Hanson, "I have frequently deserved death, and escaped it by miracle."

Mrs. Hanson watched the departing vessel as its little light became gradually fainter and fainter. It would sometimes be lost for a minute, and then again emit its feeble rays; till at length it entirely disappeared! Desperate and presumptuous man! thought she, thou hast only added to the unhappy number of the sufferers. As

she returned with her family to the house, the last words of the traveller came afresh on her memory, and they appeared to her in a new light. Her aged father being gone to bed, she determined to sit up with the servant during the night. The clock had struck twelve, and hope and anxiety for the unfortunate, had yielded to more painful feelings, when they heard the sound of footsteps. The door was opened, and the traveller appeared with a sailor, carrying the body of a drowned man. Scarce saying a word, he bore the body up stairs, and with a dexterity and perseverance that noticed nothing beyond their object, he performed, with the assistance of the family, the customary operations in those cases of restoring life. The heaving breast and the vibrating nerves soon acknowledged the springs of life; the feeble impulses of the blood became more bold and regu-

lar, and the shaded lustre of the eye was enkindled, and again, at intervals, emitted the trembling radiance of the conscious mind. The traveller watched his recovery with a strange and mysterious attention, as though he were afraid to meet the recollecting eye to which he had given the light of life. By the time the recovery of his patient was advanced to some stage of certainty, the grey mist of morning began to break on the shadows of night. Leaving what further directions were necessary with the servant, he led Mrs. Hanson from the apartment. He fastened on his haversack, and took his hat and stick.

Depart you so soon? said Mrs. Hanson.

While yet I may, he replied. He then thanked his benevolent hostess

for her kindness, and with a thoughtful brow took his leave. Mrs. Hanson observed him through the blue and dusky morning light, as he wound along the distant road, till he had gradually disappeared. What a strange man I have entertained, thought she; why did I not ask his name? He is both a hero and a coward; to swoon in terror at the sight of a picture, yet commit himself to the mad and midnight ocean in a cockle shell! Unable to reconcile the contradictions of his character, she repaired to her apartment, and, betwixt the exhaustion of fatigue and anxiety, soon fell into a profound sleep. When she awoke, the glare of broad day gave her a confused idea of the flight of time. 'Twas past noon; she dressed herself in haste, and repaired to join her family, where she found the sailor sitting with her aged father by the fire. She asked concern-

ing her patient, and learnt that he was doing well, and wished to see her as soon as she was at liberty. During her breakfast, she enquired of the sailor the particulars of the wreck.

It appeared that the vessel had bilged on some rocks early in the evening, and that the crew waited in expectation of the tide getting her off. When all hopes of her escape had been given up, and the horrors of night, and a tempestuous sea beset them, a great part of the crew took to the boat, at the hazard of reaching the shore by the current, through a heavy swelling sea, while others preferred waiting the return of day on the wreck. The boat had not departed more than ten minutes, when, by her violent rocking, the vessel went to pieces! The sailor knew no more than that he clung to a part of the wreck,

and that he occasionally distinguished at a small distance from him, several others in a similar situation. A wave at length appeared to bury them all beneath it, and betwixt exhaustion and despair, he was on the point of yielding to his fate, when he perceived a faint light moving, as it were, on the waters. It was the boat of the traveller! He was so faint as to be scarcely able of making signal of his distress; but drifting near the boat, by the traveller's glimmering light was at length discovered. He was no sooner taken on board, than the traveller directed his attention to the other floating parts of the wreck. As one of these passed the boat, they perceived something like the dress of a man entangled with it. On examining it they found the body of a man suspended by the skirts of his coat. He was taken up in a lifeless state, and conveyed to Mrs.

Hanson's, as before described. By his dress and appearance, he was a gentleman; and was considerably advanced in years. About six different people were left in the vessel when the boat bore away, two only of whom escaped. The fate of the boat was yet unknown.

Mrs. Hanson waited on her patient, who was yet in a very feeble and weak state. He was sitting up in his bed, and requested to know to whom he was indebted for his miraculous escape. Mrs. Hanson mentioned the traveller; his being lost and benighted; the singular state in which they found him, and his strange manners and disappearance. She then related the means of his preservation. He thanked her for the kind and hospitable attentions that he had received, and said that she should find that they had not been bestowed on an ungrateful person.

He ordered his clothes to be brought to him, on which he found what immediate property he had had about him. He gave Mrs. Hanson a guinea to give to the poor sailor, and requested her to send over to the neighbouring town for a doctor, and make enquiries concerning the fate of the other part of the crew.

The sailor going to the next town, which was about two miles distant, the servant girl, who had no small share of mawkish sensibility about going alone, accompanied him to procure the medical attendant, &c. On their way, they beguiled the time by conversation.

What a lonesome place your mistress has pitched her hammocks in, my pretty girl, said the sailor.

Yes, Mr. Sailor; we sees nothing but the roaring of the *say,* and the frightful tempests and *ship-racks.* She and the old man purtends to like it, but for my part, I thinks one might as well live among the savages at *Indy.*

How long have you been at your moorings? asked the tar.

Law! Mr. Sailor, you *seymans* talks sich vulgar tongue, that it is not comprehended to land people. But you must know that it is two years, come next candlemas, since master and she was in great distress. They then lived in a little cottage, and he and she was both ill together, and would have gone to the parish if it had not been for two young ladies, called the Miss Mordints. She's always a talking about it; how they were often tripping by the house along the coast, 'till one morn-

ing that it rained they ran in for shelter; and how distressed they was, and how one ran through all the rain to fetch a doctor, and sent plenty of nice things. Well you must know they no sooner got well, than they set she up in this lonesomely house.

Long life to them for their charity, said the sailor; for if nobody had lived there, I should have hammocked with Davy, last night.

With Davy, indeed! Mr. Sayman! I fancies you would have bin drownded. Well, but as I was a saying the Miss Mordints stopt in town all the winter, and used to make us quite cheerful, for they sometimes stopt three or four days, and brought their books, and work bags, and drawings. Ah! those were something like times, Mr. Sailor! But hope's always spring-

ing in the humane breast, as the poet says. You must know, that the Miss Mordints are lately come on a visit with their mother to Miss Berrington's, who has taken a house in the town; so as the season comes on, I hope for better pickings, Mr. Sailor.

The sailor now bestowed something like a half-smothered curse upon this jargon, and committed himself to the most bitter blowing weather, if there wer'nt more sharks on land than at sea.

I does not know exactly what you means to say, Mr. Sailor, but if you means to cast any reflections on parsons of my calling, I must take the liberty to tell you, that you are no longer company for Mary Hollins;—and she accordingly elevated her nose till it formed an angle of about forty-five degrees with the horizon, and moved

her offended ſrame, to the other side of the road.

The sailor with a grin of derision, and an expressive shrug of the shoulders, passed into a public-house for a glass of grog.

As soon as Miss Mary Hollins arrived at the neighbouring town, she found the loss of the vessel a common subject of remark. The other part of the crew had been driven up by the tide, and landed near the town.

Having performed her different errands, and sent off a gentleman of the faculty, Miss Mary Hollins must call at the Hon. Miss Berrington's, to unbudget her news. She found the ladies all at home, and busily engaged in their different employments; every thing was as well arranged for the ad-

mission of Mary Hollins's eloquence, as she could have hoped, and taking a chair, she gave her tongue its office. She commenced her narration, with the signals of the vessel on the edge of night, on which she bestowed a few extra shades. She then swelled the waves, and rose a wind that would have sent every timber in the British navy to the bottom of the sea:—introduced the traveller as a man dropt from the clouds, and killed him as dead as a stone, for the merit of bringing him to life again; launched him on the mountain waves in a snail-house, and having sent him half across the Atlantic, landed him on the same spot he sailed from, with the drowned man in one hand, and the sailor in the other. She then introduced flannels, warming-pans and bellows, and rubbed, burned and blowed over the recovery of the drowned man, till she had

almost lost her breath in restoring his. Dispatching the traveller in a clap of thunder, she then descended to something like truth, and concluded with a most bitter philippic against ignorance and ill-breeding.

The ladies laughed outright at Miss Mary Hollins's recital, though they were aware that the ground work on which she had embellished, was of considerable interest. Every thing that concerned Mrs. Hanson, being an object of interest to the Miss Mordents, they agreed to pay her a visit the next day, to learn the true particulars of the case. Miss Mary Hollins dropt her best curtsey, and took her leave.

CHAPTER VII.

In the breakfast-room, next morning, Mary was writing at her journal, when the rest of the party assembled.

Have you entered on your journal, the whole of Mary Hollins's narration? asked Helen.

I have just finished it, replied Mary, and I think, when my father comes, that he will be amused with it.

Do you journalize as much at length as you used to do, my dear? said Mrs. Mordent.

No, mother, said Mary. I have been looking over my old journals, and find them very superior in *quantity*; if I took a walk of a hundred yards, I find nearly as many pages bestowed upon it; and a stage of twelve miles, is absolutely a history of England.

I should like to hear them read, said Miss Berrington.

While my tea occasionally cools, replied Mary, if you will make a good long breakfast of it, I will indulge you with some extracts.

Agreed, *nemine contradicente*, said Miss Berrington; your tea shall be poured boiling hot from the urn.

Mary began.

August 5, Anno Domine—Left Liverpool—Rode over nobody this day.

6. 7. Barren mountains——Poor horses—(cause and effect.)

8. 9. 10. Ditto—Ditto—Ditto.

11. Passed through several places this day. Query. Whether villages or towns?

12. Welch turnpikes; tickets, a piece of blank paper ripped out of a book, and carried twenty miles to free the next gate!—Passed the county town of ——-, excellent grazing in the streets—Gaol sadly out of repair, the roof blown in, and no doors to it—one inn, and one man that knows English—Take in the Morning Post—Welch

church—Curate and his horse; the latter stabled in the vestry during service; not without company as well as food—several sheep being present.

13. Reached the beautiful town of B—— Agreed to stop some considerable time.

14. 15. 16. Fashion—Folly—Fun.

There is nothing ladies, here, but *dittos* for several weeks, cried Mary.

Empty your cup, said Miss Berrington, and travel on.

Mary continued.

September 6. Balls —— Miss Berrington. ——

Halt! said Helen.

"I entreat you to be candid and go on," said Miss Berrington; then recollecting herself, "O! no, you must not," she continued; "your partial hand ——"

Don't flatter yourself, my dear, said Mary; here is not another word or letter about you.

I don't believe you, Mary, said Helen.

Go and look, Helen, said Miss Berrington.

Helen ran to her sister's shoulder.

The line is filled up with notes of admiration!!! cried Helen.

I wish the urn was as large again, that it might hide my blushes, said Miss Berrington.

' Pray, said Mrs. Mordent, what may be the nature of the remarks in your journal, which succeed the name of Miss Berrington ?

" Musk--suffocation—fine speaking, and Sir Hubert Rowland,——" mother, said Mary. The next day I find—" Introduced by Mr. Pelham—Lord Berrington—character of ——" and there I have four pages of blank, which, when Ned returns from the " salt seas," he shall fill up. The rest, she continued, is all about *family affairs.*—Leave granted to stay the winter—my father's return to Warwickshire—Socialities of cold weather—Frost, influence of upon fops—Gallantry and heroism, synonomy of—Mrs. Hanson—Do people of odd taste enjoy themselves more than others ?— ———— ——

I have given no answer to this question, ladies, said Mary, shutting up

her book, and shall submit it to you for discussion. All that follows in my journal for the next twelvemonth, and bringing the date to yesterday, is comprised in two pages. It sends off Miss Berrington to the south, in tears, and we take our flight inland, without caring a farthing about her, for neither of us ventured to mention her name during the whole of the journey. The rest is all a blank till we received a certain invitation to the charming little town of B——— ;—and never more charming than when the *charm* of multitudinous fashion has left it.

"Flattery! thy name is"—*Mary Mordent,* said Miss Berrington ; I will never ask you to read your journal again, my dear.

She is a most arrant flatterer, to be sure, said Helen ; and when she is ac-

cused as one, she tells us that she said nothing, and that we flatter ourselves.

That is the perfection of the art, my dear, cried Mary; you flatter a fop by looking at him.

It being frosty and fine, the Miss Mordents now prepared for their morning's walk over to Mrs. Hanson's. Miss Berrington having a slight cold, she was prevailed upon to give up her intention of accompanying them. A feeble sun threw its faint and winterly light upon the rude and mountainous prospect before them, and a cold wind, that drove round their drawing-room fires the delicate beau, in his envelope of muslin and musk, and the apprehensive invalid, played with a wholesome shrewdness on the healthy intrepidity of eighteen. At the top of an eminence, that commanded a fine pros-

pect of the sea, our heroines rested awhile in contemplation. The weather appeared to have en-housed every other creature but themselves, and the profoundest solitude reigned around them. They at length perceived a gentleman approaching them on horseback; it was Dr. S——. He stopt to pay his respects. You have been to visit a patient at Mrs. Hanson's, I presume, said Helen. The doctor answered, with some embarrassment, in the affirmative. They asked concerning his recovery, and he replied, with increased hesitation, that he was in a weak, though by no means in a dangerous state. Recollecting that he had forgotten something, the doctor now turned his horse round, and bidding the ladies good morning, rode back with considerable speed.

Either frost or fear, said Mary, has frozen the doctor's tongue.

His manners were certainly very strange, said Helen.

As they approached the house of Mrs. Hanson, she perceived them coming, and advanced to meet them with all the cordiality of a grateful friendship. They were ushered into the sitting room, and as soon as some refreshments were set before them, Mrs. Hanson ran, in detail, through all the circumstances of the wreck, &c. and seemed to derive a peculiar delight from a reflection of the miseries which she had been the means of alleviating.

I declare, I should like to see the gentleman that has been drowned, said Mary ;—it would be like looking on a man that has been dead.

Mrs. Hanson said that he was a remarkably pleasant and sociable man,

and she would go and tell him that she had two young ladies to introduce to him.

The Miss Mordents remonstrated, but Mrs. Hanson would not hear them, and left the room, to prepare her guest for their reception. In a few minutes she returned in evident surprise and embarrassment. He is gone! she cried, holding a letter in her hand, and has left his thanks, a five-pound note, and an apology for his abrupt departure! Mary asked when she had seen him last. Mrs. Hanson replied, that Doctor S——, had not left him ten minutes, when they came in.

Helen and Mary looked at each other.

Mary mentioned the circumstance of the doctor, and his sudden return,

and asked with increased curiosity, respecting the person and manners of the old man. Mrs. Hanson, to the best of her power, described them, and grieved sincerely at the alarm which he had given to her friends. Doubt, however, as in a cloud, had enveloped the whole affair, and nothing was resolvable to any thing like clearness and explicitness of intention. Promising in a short time to repeat their visit, the Miss Mordents took their leave.

On their way, this event became the subject of conversation. Never was damsel with mystery so impaled, said Helen. I should fret myself to death, were it my case, and I cannot but admire the buoyancy of your spirits, Mary, by which you resist such continual attacks on your peace.

Alas! sighed Mary, you are giving me credit, Helen, for more courage than I possess. A rattling tongue is generally considered as a finger to the clock-work of the heart; but there are times when they have little connexion; and our manners become so purely mechanical, that they appear to be cut off from the operations of mind.

I can clearly conceive it, said Helen; and my sister has increased her claims on my heart by the avowal. Tell me, Mary, all that you think and feel concerning this *bush-fighting* lover of yours.

I scarcely know what I think, or how I *ought* to think, replied Mary; but I can confess to you, strange, and weak an infatuation as it may be, that I have gradually yielded to a kind of creeping acquiescence in his claims:

—I startled myself, Helen, at the confession, but it is true. By the continual pressure of the subject on my mind, it has some-how worn its way into my heart, and preserves over me a strange and incomprehensible influence!

Helen perceived the tears in her sister's eyes, on this acknowledgment, and embracing her with the warmest affection, vowed, in her mind, never to be separated from her. Mary returned her sister's embrace in silence, and went home with a lighter heart, though with a countenance more pale and thoughtful than usual.

The whole of the circumstances that had transpired at Mrs. Hanson's, were detailed before Mrs. Mordent and Miss Berrington, by Helen. Miss Berrington had previously been made ac-

quainted with the most interesting particulars relating to the family in general.

After considerable discussion on the subject, Mrs. Mordent retired to write to her husband. Mary went to her apartment, and Miss Berrington and Helen were left by themselves. They had sat sometime in silence, when a letter was brought to Miss Berrington. It was from Lord Berrington, and informed her that he should leave Liverpool for B——, early in the spring; it concluded with polite remembrances to her visitors. In the postscript, however, which was of a later date, mention was made of Mr. Bentley. A Captain from the Cape had *seen him* but could give no more particulars about him, than that *his name was in every body's mouth!* Miss Berrington, with a countenance indicating

agreeable news, gave the letter to Helen, and continued working at some embroidery.

Helen returned it with a smile of grateful thanks.

I shall never forget the first appearance of that youth at my father's, Miss Mordent, said Miss Berrington: It has made an impression on my mind, that will not prove advantageous to the fashionable candidates for our favour. When he returns, I shall point him out to my flutterers, as an example.

My dear Miss Berrington, said Helen, he was endeared to us, not less by his companionable qualities than the delightful ties of gratitude; by our long and familiar habits of intercourse, we, and here I particularly include my sister, had assimilated to a certain

identity of taste, by which every pleasure received a treble charm, and every sorrow was alleviated till it was lost.

How delightful is the congeniality of friendship! sighed Miss Berrington.

Mary now returned, and having resumed her spirits, which were never more attractive than after a temporary depression, her sprightliness chased away every gloomy consideration. The intelligence of Ned being among the living, and the cherished expectation of his return, threw a charm over the future, and conveyed a sense of security and protection. Time, beguiled by inspiriting hopes, passed on. Spring led the lively days, and nature, emerging from the torpor of winter, like youth springing from its couch of rest, seemed to breathe in impatient action of life.

CHAPTER VIII.

"——— Yea, and let the Devil
Be sometimes honor'd for his burning throne."

Among the earliest of the fashionable arrivals at B——, was the celebrated Mr. S——. It was his first visit to the town, and his arrival was hailed as the harbinger of wit, learning and rank. The first order that he gave to his valet, was to lock up his utensils as *Frizeur*, and put in requisition every fashionable hair-dresser of the place. They were accordingly all retained, and ar-

ranged in the order of succession, allowing the employment of three every morning. The rivalry of these knights of the *strop*, was not only an agreeable amusement, but they were a kind of *Morning Chronicles*, that did not require that their customers should *know how to read*, or put themselves to the trouble if they did. Their services, however, at present, were light; as they had little to do beyond the ordinary course of their profession, unless to give the state of parties then in the town; their characters, pretensions, &c. &c. As the town began to fill, they became gradually of more importance. They never commenced their morning's circuit, till they had devoted an hour to rehearsal, in which they had to couch all the news of the morning in as many different styles as they had customers.

Who are the *Frizii* to-day? asked Mr. S-----, one morning, of Kenrick his valet.

Your favorite, the *Count,* as they call him, is one, sir.

That is "a fellow of most excellent fancy:" Whence derived he the title of Count?

From a vile pun, sir; he used to take the receipts of the theatre. A French nobleman, Count d'Eloigne, in paying for a party, put down something short of the amount. The barber asked for the remainder, and the Count insisted that he had paid the whole. The barber becoming more peremptory, the Frenchman, with a view to awe him, said, "I am the *Count d'Eloigne,* sir; who are you?" The *Count de Monies,* said the barber!

I make it a rule never to laugh at a pun, Kenrick, or I might laugh at that. Are these torturers in waiting?

Yes, sir.

They were ordered to prepare their apparatus. During the different operations of their art, the following conversation took place.

Mr. S——. Can you tell, Count, who, in the little fashionable world of this town, is to excite the greatest attention this season?

Count. Excepting the present company, your honor, I ————

Mr. S——. D—n your exceptions, sir, I don't know whether you mean yourself or me.

Count. Comparisons are invidious, sir.

Mr. S——. They are, — proceed.

Count. It will be a hard contest, sir, betwixt beauty, simple, unsophisticated and without intrigue, and RANK.

Mr. S——. Who are the beauties?

Count. We have three, sir, commonly called the graces; not on account of their number, merely. The Hon. Miss Berrington, and the Miss Mordents, last season, carried every thing before them.

Mr. S——. Who are likely to be opposed to them?

Count. Nox, as we call her; alias Lady Knight, is the nucleus of a very powerful party.

Mr. S——. What are their attractions?

Count. Excepting those I confer on them, namely, surface and scent, powder and paint, patch and scratch,—nothing but enormous slangs of parchment, yclept rentrolls.

Mr. S——. Which side is to prevail?

Count. It yet trembles in the balance of fate; the quality are in treaty for *me,* and a few preliminary articles are absolutely adjusted; but some derogatory points have been urged with most pertinacious effrontery, which have greatly retarded the progress of the negociation.

Mr. S——. Indeed!!! Pray what terms may the beauties offer?

Count. None, sir;—I am merely *weighing* my conscience to the other party.

Mr. S——. Pray what may be the "derogatory points" at which your conscience is so startled?

Count. A certain habit, vulgarly called *lying.* We embellish, sir, *sans ceremonie,* to any height; but make it a matter of honor to have the canvass of *truth* to work upon. Will your honor be obliging enough to inform me which side you may intend to espouse.

Mr. S——. Upon my soul, you have puzzled me! You, perhaps, may throw yourself into the opposite scale, and we shall be cutting one another like two diamonds, in brilliant destruction!

Count. I hope not, sir; if you espouse the cause of the beauties, I advance my terms, —— a visit to them yesterday, put fifty per cent. on my services. I had the honor, sir, of entwining in these fingers, the luxuriant locks of Miss Mordent!

Mr. S——. Which of these three beauties is the most beautiful?

Count. I have frequently endeavoured to decide—but in vain;—that which you look on last, has the best chance.

Mr. S——. I much wonder, Count, that, with thy imagination, thou art so excellent a barber. But tell me which, with the *Graces,* are the favorite beaux.

Count. Sir Hubert Roland has hitherto taken the lead, but the arrival

of your honor, has altered the bets. Great sport is expected. The goddess *Nox* has collected forces from all corners of the empire; they are rattling in by day and night, in chariots, as various and fantastic in their forms, as the figures in broken ice. The breezes from the parade, are absolutely Arabian, and have blown back into my shop, half the perfumery that has gone out of it. If it were not for a brisk gale now and then, scents would become a drug. The atmosphere of the town, sir, has frequently superseded the services of the *beacon* to our sailors.

Mr. S——. Services like yours, Count, must not be lost; decide for the beauties, and bring your bill.

Count. I am your honor's SLAVE for ever. *Exit Count, &c.*

The town gradually filled, and the hurly-burly of balls, galas, routs, and riots, in every class and modification, commenced. Lord Berrington had arrived, and Sir Hubert Roland, who had taken up his residence with his lordship till he could procure accommodations, tendered his *squiring* services to the ladies; but they were received with a rather distant coldness, which nothing but the confident self-complacency of fashion could overlook.

To-morrow, ladies, said Sir Hubert, the celebrated B—— performs in Hamlet ——— your places are taken.

Miss Berrington appealed to the Miss Mordents, who appeared desirous to decline going at present. You will be obliging enough then, Sir Hubert, she continued, to let your servant represent us for the two first acts, and

then, if the house be crowded, by letting *others in,* he will be able to *come out!*

But his Hamlet! madam; said Sir Hubert; it is the very "glass of fashion." (eying his own "form" in the mirror.)

In which every fop may see himself, said Miss Berrington;—I dare say it will be a full house.

When Sir Hubert was gone, the Miss Mordents complained to Miss Berrington of her severity. "I should wish to see him less confident, she replied; it is making such creatures of us to bargain for our acquiescence, and conceive that he has nothing to do but to dictate. Your manners, my dears, are too gentle with him; his encroaching and insidious perseverance, will overthrow a thousand of the slight

protests of politeness, but by meeting with one steady obstacle, it is discountenanced.

But my dear Miss Berrington, said Helen, you were absolutely unmerciful; you diverted his attention even from himself.

He is accustomed to my frankness, she replied, and will think no more of it.

Our three Belles had determined on a walk along the beach before supper, but a wet and stormy evening prevented them. The rain increased, and a dark and tempestuous night set in. At an early hour they all retired to rest. Towards twelve o'clock the storm subsided; and a clear and beautiful moon shed its silver and solitary beams upon a sleeping world. Mary was

awake, and the serene solitude of the time had so seduced her from repose, that she lay in delightful contemplation of the sublime and beautiful. Her ear was presently assailed by the sound of a voice, which, by its soft and clear tones, must have been under her window. Her attention was quickly and powerfully arrested by the following song, which was sung with an emphasis and style that gave it an irresistible effect.

AIR.

Darkness now with noon-tide wings,
O'er a slumb'ring world holds sway ;—
—Mary list!—a minstrel sings
The sorrows of a lover's lay.

He whose numbers scare thy rest ;
Whose midnight song would woo thy ear,—
By a thousand cares oppress'd,
Treads another hemisphere :

Glad to rove at night's dread noon
On desart drear, or mountain bleak ;
Envying the silver moon
That warms her pale beams on thy cheek.

Often plung'd in blank despair,
With adverse fate he feebly strove;
And o'er the mountain waves wou'd bear
A heart, that had no life but love.

Often 'mid desponding woes,
Hope would daring deeds inspire;
Then the hero's bosom glows,
And love and langour melt in fire.

Still, for wealth and honor's meed,
Where danger holds the stern decree,
Still he tempts the doubtful deed,
And tempts it, Mary, but for thee.

Then should gay fashion's silken son,
By bold adventrous spirit driven,
Sue thy fair fated hand,—-ere won,
HE FALLS, AS VISITED BY HEAVEN!

The emphasis that marked the concluding stanza, was too broad and intelligible an intimation to admit of any doubts as to its author. "By what strange and unaccountable fate am I beset!" sighed Mary, as she lay ruminating on this strange adventure. "This is the very perfection of romance." Her thoughts becoming rather painful,

she arose, and throwing a loose night-dress around her, repaired to the apartment of Helen. As she crossed the gallery, she heard the sound of footsteps, and supposing that a part of the family had not retired to rest, she was passing rapidly to her sister's room, when "*hail, fair lady,*" in the voice of Sir Hubert Roland, assailed her ear, and he laid hold of her hand before she was aware of his approach. She endeavoured to disengage herself, without betraying, by her voice, who she was. Retaining her hand, he requested her only to say "good night." This she did not choose to comply with, but still endeavoured to release herself from his hold. He proposed the condition of being allowed to salute her, as the price of her liberty. This she did not think it prudent to deny, and as he imprinted a kiss, he slightly bit her cheek.

On reaching her sister's apartment, she determined on remaining with her during the night. She first mentioned her adventure in crossing from her room, and lamented that her cheek would betray her in the morning. She then related the circumstance of her serenading minstrel, and gave, to the best of her memory, the substance of his ditty. Ere our fair heroines had concluded the discussion of this event, morn, with her "rosy fingers," had undrawn the curtains of night. Sleep, at length, in trembling triumph hung over the azure eyelid, and the dull god reclined in languid luxuriance, where a monarch would have waved his crown, to slumber.

When Sir Hubert made his appearance in the breakfast-room the next morning, Lord Berrington and Mrs.

Mordent were alone,—the ladies not having yet shewed themselves He thought himself fortunate in the opportunity of *telling his story first.* He therefore informed them, that, having read in the library till a late hour, on entering his chamber, the air of the door had put out his candle; and that in going to re-light it, *he encountered* ONE *of the ladies.* He professed to be the last person who would distress a lady, and said, that he only begged the civility of her bidding him good night, —a stipulation to which, she would not agree. She preferred the condition of ceding a salute, for him to remain in ignorance. Sir Hubert then glanced at the memorandum which he had left of the happy adventure.

Lord Berrington said that he saw nothing remarkably reprehensible in the transaction, *as he told it;* and that he

believed he might trust the cause of the ladies, with the greatest possible confidence, to themselves. Mrs. Mordent thought the same.

The fair ones soon appeared, and took their seats at the breakfast table; *each having a small black patch, in the same place, on the left cheek.* Lord Berrington looked at Sir Hubert, and smiled. Miss Berrington asked Sir Hubert if he had ever travelled in the back-settlements of America?

Sir Hubert replied, with tolerable composure of countenance, in the negative.

"Did you really never *scalp* any body, Sir Hubert!" she continued,—"tell the truth, cannibal!"

Never, madam.

What a chieftain have the *Catabaws* lost! she continued. Methinks I see you with a string of scalps, bending to some copper-coloured nymph, who, while she counts them over, smiles in gracious approbation of your suit!

Sir Hubert cried out for quarter, which was unanimously negatived, and he was constrained to bear a tide of raillery for the whole morning.

In the course of the day, Mrs. Mordent was summoned in council on the subject of the nightly minstrel; and Lord Berrington and Sir Hubert, rode over to the neighbouring town.

In a few days, Mr. Mordent arrived from Warwickshire; and lodgings were taken for the family during the season. Mr. Pelham was to follow him in a few weeks. Fashion was now in its

meridian, and the whole town was one continual parade of contending consequence, from the dashing landau and six dancing greys, of Mr. S——. down to the ricketty *Buggy* of an emigrated citizen. Amusement ogled its votaries in every thing that was magnificent, and that was mean; sometimes in the *squall* of a concert, & sometimes, from very artifice, in the startling novelty of sense: sometimes five hundred beautiful eyes were bent on the animated countenance of a lecturer, and sometimes on a galloping jack-ass! Thus did fashion, in its wild, comical and cometary course, lead the vacilating fancies of taste, in the town of B———, till a masquerade, with all its delicious and seductive charms, was announced by Lady Knight. A fortnight had yet to be devoted to preparation, and *every body was going.* The apartments, taken by Mr. Mordent for his

family, were continually besieged by Sir Hubert Roland; and yet there was something so polite, even in his fashionable effrontery, that it would have been a matter of difficulty, as well as ill-breeding, to quarrel with it. Sir Hubert had recourse to every artifice of persuasion on the subject of the masquerade; but he had hitherto been unsuccessful. His servants had kept places for the ladies every night at the theatre, and yet they had never been. This persevering siege of attention, though powerless on their inclination, at length effected a kind of claim on their generosity, and they agreed to attend the theatre the succeeding night. Sir Hubert flew with the happy intelligence to Miss Berrington, who agreed to take tea with her friends, and accompany them.

I pity you, my dears, said Miss Berrington, as she joined them the next

day; this creature will be a greater plague to you now than ever; all his future solicitation will be aimed at your charity.

Our ladies were scarce seated in the theatre, before a large party of officers entered the opposite boxes. Mary, whose opera glass was straying from groupe to groupe in rapid succession, at length, among these heroes, lighted on what appeared to her to be the countenance of *Ned Bentley!* Delight, for a moment, confounded her observance. He was in a dress that was half military, and half otherwise; one arm was in a sling; he was resting his head on the other, and, with his countenance turned towards the stage, appeared absorbed in thought, rather than observation. A graceful plume threw its shade upon his features, and he appeared so devoured by

his own reflections, as scarcely to notice a most marked attention from the company around him. There was one, however, to whose conversation he appeared to attend, though not to reply. He was sitting in a thoughtful posture, like himself, and appeared to speak rather in the way of suggestion than detail.

Mary told her sister to beware of her fluttering heart while she directed her eye; and Helen startled with alarm, even at the caution.

The retreating roses soon confessed the recognition of our fair observer; the sparkling eye appeared to have stolen its spirit from the cheek, and the current, ebbing to the heart, and as though the herald of its fires, in its reflux rushed with redoubled crimson to its station. Miss Berrington saw, and acknowledged the likeness. Sir

Hubert Roland was at this time absent from his fair companions, over whom a fluttering and indecisive trepidation prevailed. They contemplated the interesting and improved appearance of our hero; a more darkened and thoughtful feature imparted its severe and saddened import to his countenance, and a melancholy and reflecting humour appeared to have absorbed him totally. He at length arose. His increased stature, and his form, dilated into the round proportions of manhood, seemed to have retained only that certain indentity of expression, by which a man continues himself. Bowing to his companions, as though in the salutation of leaving them for the night, he retired, and was followed by the youth with whom he appeared to be in more immediate friendship.

Our fair trio left the theatre at the close of the play. The sensations of

each, though different, were delightful; a friendship of sentiment united their hearts, and an intuitive propriety that disposed of their feelings on this occasion, led them home in a mood more serious and contemplative than usual.

CHAPTER IX.

"The strong, the brave, the ignorant and the wise
Sink in the soft captivity together."

Miss Berrington was contemplating from her window the gay parade of fashion, when the carriage of Mr. S— *stopt at the door.* The celebrated patriot! The oracle of the wise! The pilot of taste, and the meteor of fashion!—It is certain that Miss Berrington's changeful cheek confessed some little derangement of the nervous system on this visit.

After an interview of some length, with Lord Berrington, in the library, Mr. S—— was introduced to the room where Miss Berrington was sitting. There are certain situations in which the most fluent speaker may be confounded, and where the most confident and polite labour under all the awkwardness of embarrassment. There are certain objects, which, in an instant, harmonize with our taste; they appear, as by enchantment, to be the patterns of our fancy; charms which had frequently floated before us in vision, but never in reality. In the supremacy of a delight which absorbs all other considerations, as the radiance of the sun eclipses the glitter of the firmament, we yield ourselves to the delicious encroachment; and in such a mood the common forms and civilities of life come but tardily off.

When Mr. S—— was gone, Lord Berrington mentioned the object of his visit, which was a subscription for the sufferers in a late brilliant naval atchievement. In this exploit, Mr. Bentley had been the prominent and leading figure, and his Lordship observed that it was his intention to give the hero a general invitation to his house during his stay. Miss Berrington smiled in acquiesence of his intent.

What a noble mind does fashion enslave, in the generous S—— ! said his lordship. He envies this child of fortune his free and daring spirit, which would cross the cannon's mouth for the very love of its rattle.

He bears, I hope, a motive more powerful, as well as more rational, said Miss Berrington.

His Lordship bent his enquiring eyes on his daughter.

He could not, she continued, have remained so long the companion of the Miss Mordents, and have borne away a solitary and uninterested heart.

"I admire his taste," said his Lordship, who understood this as a confession of a tender friendship between the parties, "but Sir Hubert Roland is laying close siege to the interests and affections of the old gentleman."

To this Miss Berrington made no reply.

Mr. S—— dines with us to-morrow, my dear, said his Lordship, with rather a significant inclination of his eye.

The kindling crimson that crept on Miss Berrington's cheek, as though it

felt a conscious challenge, dwelt in mantling confusion there. And yet there was nothing defined in her sensations, and this vague confession of an interest was a matter of surprise, even to herself.

Lord Berrington now made some ordinary remark, as though to restore the complacence which he had deranged, and left the room: And Miss Berrington, hastily putting on her mantle and hat, flew to pay a visit to her female friends.

Ned Bentley and his friend, were lingering over a late and thoughtful breakfast, when the following billet was delivered.

"If E. Bentley can overlook the injustice of the past, Mr. Mordent would

be happy in the renewal of his friendship."

12, —— Street.

Ned immediately arose, as though to obey the delightful summons. His friend observed the animation of his eye, and the electric emotions of his frame. He, for the first time, threw by the sling of his wounded arm; girt on his sword, and quickly appeared complete *en militaire.*

Are you going to carry a fort, or depopulate a town? asked his companion.

Neither my friend, he replied. Thou seest this slender golden chain, *(producing one from his bosom)* this cornelian heart, so difficult of impression—

Which nothing but a *diamond* can *wound!* interrupted his companion.

—— This was the little talisman of my arm in the fight; this, against which the fairest bosom upon earth has heaved, and the throbbing seat of life has beaten;—I go to restore the precious treasure, and claim its prototype.

The best fortunes of love accompany you, sighed his thoughtful friend.

Nay, you go with me, said Ned; I will introduce you to Mary; the laughing, and light-hearted Mary! gay without thoughtlessness, and whose changeful and innocent levity, like a summer cloud, varies, even under the painter's hand, its form and colour.

O! I am in love, even with the picture! exclaimed the enthusiast. (*regarding the countenance of Ned*.) But why, Bentley, this sudden gloom?

Reflection, like a cloud, seems to have crossed the fair prospect of thy thought.

You are right, replied Ned; it has. He paced the room, as though in painful apprehension. What changes, thought he, might not have taken place in my absence? Doubtful that some fatal intelligence might rush on him unawares, and fearful of committing himself to the hazard, he expressed his intention to decline his visit till the next day. In the course of the evening, in calling his servant, he found him in a state of inebriation; and quickly found that he had been sacrificing to the "jolly god" with the servant of Mr. Mordent. In a few minutes, Mr. Mordent's servant was before him. How were his master and mistress, was very soon asked.

They were well.

——- And the young ladies—the daughters—the Miss Mordents.

Miss Mary, was very well, but Miss Helen was sadly out of spirits.

Thou art a charming, happy fellow! Go drink and be merry: —— Only out of spirits, you said; not ill?

No, sir; she is gone to the play; but Sir Hubert is in a terrible taking about her, too.

Eh? who?

Sir Hubert Roland, sir;—he's mortal fond of her.

Indeed!! Go, wretch, unto thy home!

The servant was very glad to leave, what he supposed to be a confirmed

madman. Ned threw himself on the couch, for dark and annihilating thought pressed heavily upon him. Having yielded awhile to the impetuosity of his feelings, the rays of reason and of hope broke through the murky despondency that enveloped him; and trifles, light as those by which he had been depressed, again called forth all the alacrity of his mind. He accompanied his friend to the theatre. With the soul-dissolving flame playing round his heart, he contemplated, at a distance, from a secluded spot, the figure of Helen! Her slender, spheral form; her eye of thoughtful bent, and her radiant beauty, though in outline, placed her in distinguished view. She shone like the flaming diamond, amid the twinkle of inferior brilliants. His eye hung upon her in devouring gaze till, at the close of the play, she arose to depart. He was frequently in the

act of rushing into her presence; but a dread that his reception might banish for ever all hope from his heart, prevented him. He saw her depart; Mary only was with her. He followed the carriage, and saw them alight at their own lodgings. The door closed, and he approached. His eye traced the motto on the carriage:

*Disponendo me, non mutando me.**

Happy omen! he exclaimed; I hail, Helen, thy mind in thy motto. With a flattering vision of the morrow playing before his fancy, he wandered in delightful reverie till a late hour. Darkness and silence reigned around him; he passed, and repassed the dwelling. He resolved to see out the streaming light in the chamber window, where, in fancy, he thought she

* Exalted, but not changed.

might lie; and at length, when the light was extinguished, he put up an ardent prayer for her safety and repose.

Alas! he knew not in what degree they were in danger!

The fluctuating state of his mind had indisposed him for sleep, and time had told the first hour of the morning, when he bent his steps to the inn. The night was profoundly dark, and a drizzling rain was falling. He was gradually yielding to the power of the drowsy god, when his attention was arrested by the cry of fire. He arose, and rapidly dressed himself, and followed the guide of several people who appeared to be hurrying to the scene of action. A strange presentiment of alarm assailed his mind as he followed the still-inclining direction to the sa-

cred spot which he had recently left; a strange medley of hopes and fears, which we are not metaphysicians enough to account for, nor ignorant enough to describe, seemed to lead his expectations. On making a turn which gave him a sight of the window, where, to his fancy, slept the amiable Helen, who shall write his feelings, when he saw the glare of the devouring element, issuing through in destructive splendor! An overwhelming and sickly torpor subdued the first resistance of his mind; alarm, for a moment, palsied exertion, and a sensation, like death, suspended his power both of body and mind. But only for a moment; the next instant gave him a supernatural energy. Almost with the speed of thought he arrived at the spot. A crowd, in considerable numbers, had assembled. A carriage stood at the door, into which were hurried,

in the height of confusion and distress, *Mr.* and *Mrs. Mordent*; and after them was borne the pallid and insensible features of Mary. This only distended his apprehension to the very extreme of torture. He heard the convulsive voice of the mother, calling upon Sir Hubert Roland to preserve her Helen! Ned heard no more. He darted through the suffocating smoke of the entrance, and perceived, perhaps his rival, bending his hesitating eyes on the curling fires of the staircase. He passed him in a haste of desperation that stopt not to observe, and disappeared through the eddying flame!

Helen slept in an apartment at the back of the house, and danger had allowed no time to others for the consideration of aught but their own safety. Awoke, however, by the noise and

clamour around her, she soon became sensible of her situation. A thick and sultry air almost overpowered her respiration. In the alarm and confusion of the moment, she threw her clothes hastily around her and rushed to the stairs; but smoke and flame impeded her progress. She saw the figure of a man ascending through the spiral element; his sword glared amid the flaming splendor, and his emerging form at length disclosed to her the person of NED BENTLEY! Joy! admiration and love! overpowered her grateful mind, and she sunk senseless in his arms. What were the feelings of our hero? The steps had crumbled to ashes beneath his feet; the heat had nearly arrested him in his passage, and it was death to return! Of life he thought not, but as he could preserve that of her whom he supported. She recovered only to despair of escape.

The windows were at an immense height from the ground, and the encroaching flames allowed not the respite even of consideration. Ned became desperate; he tore a part of the curtains from the bed, and twisting it into a flambeau, lighted it at a consuming beam, and led his trembling charge up another flight of stairs. With his sword he demolished a small window, the air from which, for a moment, relieved the intolerable oppression of heat. The window opened on the slanting tiles, which presented no footing. He struck his sword against the wall, which returned only the sound of wood and plaister. The next minute saw it yield to his strength, and having made an aperture, he led through the slender form of the all grateful Helen. He now found himself in the attic of another house, which appeared to have been wainscoted off into a distinct

dwelling. The inhabitants were busy in throwing out at the window, and carrying down stairs, the different articles of furniture. Amid the confusion, he passed unnoticed to the ground floor. The astonished and yet trembling Helen, now asked in painful anxiety concerning her parents and her sister, and learning that they were safe, a heavy and silent joy oppressed her. The rain had increased, and anxiety and terror appeared to absorb the attention of every person they met. Scarcely knowing how best to proceed in so interesting and delicate a case, he committed his fearful and blushing charge to a female, within the shade of a small apartment near the door, and ran to his inn to procure a chaise. Betwixt his own exertions and the driven ones of others, he very soon returned, and led the glowing Helen from her conceal-

ment. Save the partial glare of the crackling pile, the night was tremendously dark, and having seated the object of his anxiety in the chaise, and given the chaiseman direction to drive to Lord Berrington's, agreeable to her desire, he was prompted to accompany her. In the first ardor and impetuosity of his intention he had placed his foot on the steps to ascend—but

"Consideration, like an angel, came."

He withdrew, closed the door, and got upon the bar.

Now, said Ned, in the tumultuous joy of his heart, let the conflagration blaze. How enviable! how delightful were his feelings! How poor! how feeble were all the trials of his past life, when opposed to the blissful beatings in his bosom on this triumph.

Arrived at Lord Berrington's, Ned knocked loudly at the door. It was

the screaming and fearful mother that ran to open it; she could just distinguish the chaise, and perceive somebody approaching from it:—A terrible shriek of joy burst from her lips, as the dishevelled form of Helen threw itself into her arms, and buried her face in her bosom. Mrs. Mordent had fainted, and Ned with difficulty supported them, till Miss Berrington and her maid, who had been alarmed at the scream, ran to his assistance. Helen turned her eloquent eyes on her preserver, as he consigned her to their care. He entreated permission to wait on her at an early hour.

—Permission! exclaimed Helen; O! Ned, why do you ask it.

Ned returned to the wasteful scene of fire, but with a flame in his heart more ardent than the element which

he had defied. The engines had been playing; the progress of the flames were soon arrested, but the house was reduced to a ruinous shell.

Our hero returned to his inn; he threw himself on the bed, and yielded up his fancy to a vision, sweet as a lover's sleep, and kind as his dream.

When Ned met his friend at breakfast, from whom, at the play, he had stolen like a miser to view his treasure, he was astonished to find him ignorant of the events of the night. He listened to Ned's account of them with the greatest interest and anxiety. He accompanied Ned, who had received a polite and general invitation, to Lord Berrington's, where the whole of Mr. Mordent's family had taken refuge. They passed the ruins of the fire, the cause of which had not yet been accu-

rately traced, and stopt awhile to contemplate its effects. Ned introduced his friend to Lord Berrington, as *Theodore Anderton*, in the name of which he was immediately recognised as one of the intrepid conquerors in the action to which Ned owed his present fame. Miss Berrington welcomed the two gallant Britons with a kindness which the modesty of her manner chastened in effect, while it bestowed an indescribable charm on its value. A variety of wild and complicated feelings affected our hero, in meeting the family of Mr. Mordent; his first and dearest friends. Mr. Mordent received him with strong emotions of gratitude and shame; Mrs. Mordent in silent and grateful tears; Mary in the most endearing familiarity, with eloquent thanks, and Helen, in a rosy confusion that was more delicious to his heart than all that the tongue could utter.

Ned purposely led the attention of his friends from the events of the preceding night. Of every thing that had happened to our hero from the date of his letter on the Atlantic ocean, they were ignorant; and Mary proposed the recital of his adventures, as a rich treat for the evening's amusement, but positively interdicted it till that time.

Mr. Anderton protested against Ned telling his own story, and said, that his modesty would clip its merits, and therefore weaken its interest.

Mary said that the remark was just, but asked who could supply his place?

"Theodore Anderton, but too well," said Ned, "but he stands in the same predicament himself, and is more afraid of hearing his own merits than injuring the story."

Mary's eye met the interesting gaze of the naval hero whom, she was afraid, her remark had had a tendency to rebuke. His eye expressed regret rather than anger, and a desponding cloud seemed to have overcast his countenance. She wished to remove from his mind all the traces of any such intention; she said something about not knowing that *he* was acquainted with the circumstances; that she was sorry that she had been misunderstood,—but her manners expressed more regret than her words. She hesitated, and coloured, and stopt;—and Theodore's countenance resumed its spirit.

The narration was now agreed to be referred till evening, and the hour of assembly was proclaimed.

CHAPTER X.

Where the prime actors of the last year's scene?
Their port so proud, their buskin and their plume?
How many sleep who kept the world awake
With lustre and with noise!

NED and his friend Theodore, after a thoughtful absence, returned at the time appointed. The former would willingly have consigned the recollection of his whole adventures to oblivion, to have yielded himself up to his present sweet and subduing sensations; to the "slow succession of soft

impulses," which his smiling fortunes, and the presence of his friends inspired. The entrance of Sir Hubert Roland, however, crossed this agreeable plasticity of his mind; and, for awhile, scared his visionary delights,—but his spirit, which, for a moment, ebbed in despondency, returned with recruited energy to its purpose. The behaviour of Sir Hubert was courteous in the extreme; he seemed to take great delight as well as *trouble* in commending Ned's gallant spirit of atchievement, of which the little world around, at present, seemed only to ring in praise.

Sir Hubert now made some overtures concerning the approaching masquerade, and offering the ladies a day's further consideration, promised to renew the subject in form.

Mary bit her lips in impatience of his stay.

The fair auditors of our hero had determined on a *monopoly* of the promised narration, and Sir Hubert's departure was the signal for Ned to commence his task.

Ned first ran over his acquaintance with the foreign philosopher *De Laurent*,—his death, and the circumstances attending it; thus introducing the events connected with his earliest acquaintance with his friend. You will now suppose me, he continued, launched on the broad bosom of the Atlantic. An impudent frigate, with every eye on board looking out for an enemy. The peculiarity of my fate was lost in admiration of the scene about me; at the order, discipline and regularity with which every thing was conducted! I felt myself to be too good an Englishman to remain an indolent and sluggish spectator of an or-

der of things which was the boast of my happy country, and the effects of which reached the extremities of the world.

Perseverance has long arms; there are few exercises on board a ship, which strength or application can accomplish, that I did not soon contrive to practice with tolerable dexterity. My services were observed and acknowledged. On a statement of my case, the captain, who was a true chip of the noble spirit of his profession, did me the honor to offer me his friendship. He offered it, sailor-like, in those abrupt and unequivocal terms, which dispose of all ceremony—and, like a sailor, I accepted of it. This circumstance placed me in a less ungracious position with the crew in general. Our brave captain was suffering under an increasing debility of

frame, and a consequent languor of spirits—the reward of severe services in the hot climates. He perhaps found me of service to him; it is certain that I received such marks of friendship and attention from him as will always be peculiar objects of pleasurable remembrance.

You will now consider me as driving sublimely through the desolation of waters, and approaching rapidly under the tropic. All the frigidity of sentiment seemed to melt before the generous radiance that poured around me; and the mind seemed to expand to the benevolent sun, as though in feeble emulation of his virtue. Having executed some commission at one of the islands, we beat about in the narrow seas by which the isles are separated, for a considerable time, in hopes of falling in with some of the enemy's

cruisers. We at length fell in with a small squadron of British line of battle ships. I was here very forcibly struck with a new and admirable effect of discipline. Some signal, as by, enchantment, in an instant seemed to give a particular direction to the energies of our small crew. The course of the vessel was immediately changed, and we bore up under the stern of a majestic three-decker, on which a broad pendant was flying. Our captain went on board and remained for some time. On his return he sent for me and informed me that he was dispatched, with another frigate, on a dangerous enterprise. He seemed desirous of soliciting my company, but professed himself willing to send me on shore, if I preferred it, at the first place we touched. I begged, if he could dispose of me with any service to the vessel, to remain. He shook

me very cordially by the hand, and, as though he had a very deep impression of the nature of the service on which he was going, appeared to derive a flattering confidence from my acceding to his wish. I accordingly received a kind of nominal post among the crew, and the other frigate clearing out from her companions, we parted company with the squadron and made for Jamaica. Being detained here two days in making some refitments, and taking in such articles as our voyage might require, the captain invited me to go on shore with him during our stay. It was morning when we landed, and the appearance of the country, so different to what I had ever seen, inspired new and pleasant sensations. These feelings, however, were soon dissipated by those of a more painful nature. My mind was divided by admiration and regret. A handful

of my countrymen holding secure and uncontrouled sway over a population of slaves, so widely disproportioned in number! However deep the seeds of vice may be scattered in a savage life, I witnessed some native traits of character which disclosed such amiable feelings, that I trembled and blushed, when I recollected the relation which such people bore to our society. These feelings are, no doubt, common to every stranger that visits the islands; and *first impressions are allowed to be most just.* It is easy to discern, in the most wild state of the human mind, the rudiments of correct feeling; or such a state of mind as is susceptible of just and virtuous impressions. I gave up my mind wholly to observation of the negro character. Who does not see, in their opinions of the dead, the best affections of the human mind, *a love of their country.* The

noblest principles may be obscured by superstition, but *their* superstition serves only to give a wild and affecting simplicity to their love, that is, perhaps, more indicative of true feeling, than all the philosophy of the civilized world.

At a house where the corpse of a negro had been put in his coffin, a number of these unsophisticated children of nature, had assembled; they appeared almost to envy the journey of the dead, who, in the firm conviction of their minds, was going back to the friends of their youth. They all threw their mites and remembrances of love into the coffin, while the most lively interest played in their sooty countenances, While I was marking this (to me) new situation of the human mind, a sable lass of about twelve years of age, breathing quick with

haste and impatience, ran up to the crowd. Her sparkling eye and chubby cheek, acknowledged the animated purpose of her visit; she approached the coffin in a half indifferent manner, as though to disguise the interest which she felt, and slid in her little remembrance with a miserly joy that speaks not of its satisfaction.

This was long a subject of rumination to a raw traveller, like myself. On meeting with our captain, we waited on a merchant of his acquaintance. He was not at home, but his negro servant would have run to the devil to fetch him. This we forbid, and asked what time his master dined.

He ran to the clock, and pointing with his finger to the hour of two, said "my massa dines there."

At that hour we returned, and were received and treated with a noble and princely hospitality, that had but too strong a tendency to efface the recollection of the miseries to which we were indebted for our enjoyments.

The implicit and prompt obedience, and the unreflecting respect of a negro to his employer, ought, at least, to excite our gratitude. If a white man speak kindly and affectionately to a negro, he is overpowered by his grateful feelings.

I was present at some of the markets, and was a witness to some of the miseries of this unfortunate and unoffending people; and I left the island, pronouncing a curse on the fortunes of the human race.

This, no doubt, was wrong; I feel that some deference is due to an established order of things in which so much merit is displayed. I lamented that there exists no acknowledged principles of legislation by which, at once, the services of the uncivilized part of the world may be put in requisition, and their merits fairly and justly rewarded. Wherever the human mind is found, there exists the materials of a strength to which calculation can scarce give a limit. You will pardon, ladies, these digressive miseries; but they attach so strongly to the importance of the subject that it is difficult to get rid of them.

The eyes of his fair auditors pronounced an honorable acquittal.

You will now, ladies, consider our little floating community as passed the line, and encountering a tremendous

gale of wind. It is here, next to the hour of battle, that you perceive the highest merits of English seamen. When death appears to ride on the mast, and the reeling pilot turns pale at his post—it is then that courage and qualification find their value. Ignorant of the degrees of danger, I referred occasionally to the countenance of some intrepid tar, as the barometer of my hopes. I remained on deck, contemplating the maddening roar of the ocean. The wind whistled among the masts with that kind of irresistible sound which seemed to challenge our annihilation, and to bid absolute defiance to all obstruction. All that I had ever conceived of the sublime, was inferior to the elemental warfare in which we were engaged. The frigate in company with us, was at times perceptible by her mast, riding on a mountain of foam; and sometimes

plunging into an unfathomable abyss. But the sublimity of the tempest itself was perhaps inferior to that of contemplating the energies of our little crew. I should almost conceive it possible for a coward to learn to be brave; the effect of eminent example being almost equal to induce a belief that every thing is practicable. The mountainous commotion appeared at length to roll with an abated spirit, as though the genius of the storm had been appeased, and the wild uproar gradually subsided into a tremulous agitation.

The derangement occasioned by this rough battle of the elements, was soon rectified; and we were now informed of the enterprize on which we were destined. A number of the enemy's privateers, &c. were infesting the seas near the Cape, and, as many of our frigates as could be spared from their

stations, had received orders to cruise in particular latitudes, with a view to intercept them. Our Captain had been engaged in similar services, and mentioned to me, in confidence, his opinion of the enemy; the ships which they engaged in such services, their number of men and their weight of metal, together with their method of fighting, &c. "They reason correctly," said he, "as far as the principles upon which they reason are applicable. But they are working a question in one rule upon the principles of another, and therefore the answer which they produce in theory does not meet that which is produced by fact.

"Their weakness is in their strength. If they would proceed geometrically in the question, and apportion every man the exact latitude which his exertions require, they would arrive at all the

advantages which are to be derived from physical strength. They are correct in proportioning their means to their end; but their means jostle, if I may be allowed the expression, and the end is not produced. But there is no disquisition that can illustrate the question of our superiority. Were it merely chimerical it might be exposed; did it consist exclusively in skill, in confidence, or in courage, we might occasionally be beaten; *it consists in an assemblage of them all.* I remember that, at a time when this was a common subject of discussion in France, it was asserted by a French sage, that, if a crew of French philosophers would submit to be disciplined in the navy for a twelvemonth, they would beat any equal force which the British marine could oppose to them. *It was a good thing for the philosophers that the experiment was not made.*

So much for the doctrine of the energies of mind."

Our captain had scarce concluded these observations, when the cry of "a sail" called us from theory to practice. We presently discerned several of our heavy laden merchantmen endeavouring to escape from the enemy's cruisers. On discovering the enemy, they had separated from each other and were seen straggling at different points. Our two little frigates bore impudently up to cross the pursuit. The enemy consisted of three large privateers, and after contemplating us for some time, they prepared to receive us. As we advanced, they opened several random fires upon us, which we did not condescend to return till we got to closer quarters. We then threw in our close and steady broadsides, and a most obstinate and desperate action ensued.

What quality or designation of character I possess, I know not; but I stood proudly on the deck, enveloped in fire and smoke, and fancied myself the genius of desolation; and though never before disposed to injure aught of living form, had the united navies of the world been placed before me as enemies, I felt revenge enough to annihilate them all! To this feeling I must have been prompted, by seeing our little crew fall miserably before a dreadfully superior force. Our brave captain fell at my feet, and as he expired before me, pressed his sword into my hand, and I griped it with a nerve of horrid and desperate purpose. The lieutenant was almost immediately after dreadfully wounded and carried below;—rank succeeded rank only to lead on the dreadful succession. The deck was a miserable wreck of splinters, and rigging, and

blood. Suffocated with stench and smoke, and continually stumbling over the bodies of our little crew, I paced the ruinous scene of death with no feeling but that of revenge. In this situation I received the unanimous election of the remaining crew as their leader, and our fire for a moment slackened, while they heard my decision.

"This," said I, "is the sword of your captain; it may pass from my hand to yours—from yours to any other of our noble crew, but as long as there is any life in these nerves, it shall never pass into the hand of the enemy."

A general huzza was the answer that was returned; a more dreadful one to the enemy than the strongest broadside that we could have poured.

"You have appointed me your leader," I continued, "and your first duty is obedience,——nail the colours to the mast."

I was instantly obeyed. There, thought I, have I solved the problem of British superiority. Our fire now recommenced from every hand on deck, and the enemy shewed a disposition to board. But, whatever the intention, he stopt short of the act, and continued a straggling and abated fire. Night was closing in, and a dead calm hung over the ocean. As the heavy darkness of the climate came gradually on, the fire of both parties by degrees discontinued; yet, ever and anon, to the last ray of twilight, some straggling shots were exchanged; some solitary tar, from very love of his employment, would keep to his gun,—spitting his venom by himself. At

length, darkness, deep as that of death, gave a respite to our labours. The frigate in company with us, we had distinguished on the edge of night so stationed as to command a partial fire upon two of the enemy; a position similar to ours, except that we were close under the quarter of the enemy's largest vessel, The enemy that was thus placed in an angle between us, from the deadness of the calm, could only occasionally gall us with her great guns.

Thus situated, with not a stick standing upon deck, but with the body of the vessel still sound, I waited upon the wounded lieutenant, who was now the only commissioned officer on board. He supposed that we had struck, and begged that he might be moved in as gentle a manner as possible. I undeceived him, and he regarded me for

some time in silence. I, no doubt, made a curious and ferocious appearance. I had lost my hat, and given my neckerchief as a bandage for a wounded sailor; my hair was loose and wild as the scene in which I had been engaged;—my features blackened with smoke and powder, and sprinkled with blood! "Pursue the bent of your own genius" he at length exclaimed. I called our little crew around me, and represented the danger of waiting till morning for our fate, as the enemy would inevitably then discover our weakness, and her third vessel was, as yet, little injured. In this motley and determined little circle of heroes, I discovered my friend the Irishman, to whom I was mostly indebted for the situation in which I then found myself. He appeared half ashamed to meet my eye; I offered him my hand, and he blubbered over

it like a child. I called for twelve men who would stand by me as long as I required them; and the Irishman was the first among nearly double the number that immediately offered their services. The twelve I chose were composed partly of marines, and partly of sailors, but all strong and muscular fellows; each being armed with a cutlass and two pistols. The boat was launched with the greatest caution, and with four muffled oars we moved with the silence of death through the scarcely agitated waters. I directed to be rowed to the British frigate. We passed nearly under the stern of the enemy, which had been mostly engaged by our companion. Lights were hung in different parts of the ship, and several centinels were pacing the deck; her foremast lay over her side, and she appeared a most complete wreck. On reaching the frigate,

and making a signal, we were immediately taken on board. Desolation there, had been not less busy than with ourselves. The complaints of the wounded mixed with the song of the veteran, who was clearing his tackle for the next day's sport! The captain lay dangerously wounded in the cabin. I need not describe to you my regret on discovering him to be the noble Frederic Maurice—the worthy relative of Mr. Pelham. He greeted me with the greatest friendliness, though suffering from the anguish of his wound. I made him acquainted with our situation, suggested my design of boarding the enemy which had kept aloof, by boats, and asked his advice. He bade me take what additional number of men I required. "We have been fighting against treble metal," said he. "Do not be afraid to demand every able hand on board, if you judge that

you may need them." The crew was accordingly assembled, and I named my proposal. "If there be any among you," I cried, "that prefer a glorious death to the lingering disgrace of a French prison; that value your country's honor more than your own safety; that have aught dear in the considerations of life, worthy an hour of glorious enterprise,—let him follow me." At that moment, a languid youth, who had thrown himself at length on the deck, and appeared defeated in his heart by the desperation of circumstances, rose up his head. "Who is he," I cried, "that arises, as from the dead, at the call of glory?" He spoke not, but rising deliberately, he drew his cutlass and flung his scabbard into the sea. He then belted his pistols, and received the command of a portion of our force.

Three boats were launched, in which were disposed about thirty men, with the usual materials for such an enterprise. We were a kind of "forlorn hope;"—to the timid mind, danger was our compass, and death our pilot.

You will spare me the detail of the attack; it was a scene of darkness, carnage and death. Not a star was to be seen in the heavens, and the glimmering lights on board served only to render the horror visible. The French captain and many of the most determined of his crew, fell at the foot of their colours. It was over this heap of slaughter that I first clearly saw, by the flashing of pistols, the countenance of the hero by whom I had been so ably seconded. That hero was Theodore Arderton! Our acknowledgment was mutual, though only by the eye. The vessel was soon at our

disposal; and I claimed my friend. We dispatched two boats announcing our success, and waited impatient for the morn. The time offered no inducement to sleep, and we remained pacing the deck, till the deepning orient tints stole on the trailing drapery of night. A light breeze now springing up, with little more than a dozen able men left, we bore audaciously down upon our enemies and boldly called upon them to surrender. During the night they had completely cleared their decks, and were prepared to renew the engagement,—knowing our inability to escape them. Astonishment and despair now changed their purpose, and they hauled down their colours.

Let those who have only heard of the courage of British sailors, attempt to praise them; I have seen their ex-

ertions. 'Tis not to be merely brave; to be as ardent and active as fire; that is a spirit which may be exhibited on shore. 'Tis not a little prize money, which is thrown carelessly and lavishly away in grog, or upon his girl, that can inspire or reward the labours of a sailor. It is a noble sentiment by which he is actuated; a sentiment generated and cherished only in a life of perpetual danger. At sea, the energies of his mind are in continual exercise; his vigilance, his caution, or his fortitude is always upon the stretch. When he unbends on shore, therefore, it is to exclusive enjoyment. Uncalculating in his generosity, he would relieve the miseries or wants of others, were it only to perfect the scene around him. He holds his money, as it were, as the painter does his colours of light, throwing in the enlivening relief till the shade itself is softened

into life. It is natural to indulge in the description of any thing from which we receive lively impressions. But to return to my narrative. We now spoke with several merchantmen, and learnt that they had parted company with their convoy in a gale of wind. We received from them several different hands, and contrived to tow our three prizes to the Cape. Captain Maurice died on the passage. At the Cape he received the honors of a friend and a hero.

We here spent many pleasant months. —Our equipment was slow, from the fewness of hands and a lack of materials;—the place having recently fallen into our possession. I know not why I should detain you further with my adventures; but the remainder of them are of so different a nature that they may at least answer the purpose of amusement.

Owing to the death of so many of our officers, no regular dispatches of the action were forwarded to England. This want of official authority was attended with some other trifling consequences on shore. We were received by the Governor of the Cape with all the honest welcomes of a Briton, on whose ears nothing sounds so grateful as the success of his country's arms. The people of Cape town are composed of a mongrel race of ill bred Germans and Dutch, but mostly of the latter. The first things that you learn respecting them are, that they are idle and fat. You see them during the whole of the morning, lounging on the platforms before their houses, drinking and smoking. After dinner they sleep all the evening, and eat enormous suppers at nine o'clock.—And here you have a complete history of the people of the Cape of Good

Hope, for these last fifty years.—A monkey trick that an English sailor played on one of the Boors, was the innocent cause of some little disturbance. As Mr. Anderton and I were returning from our evening's walk on the shore, we called to see a wounded sailor. In an apartment that we went through, there was an assembly of Frenchmen, English sailors, and different inhabitants of the Cape, with their Hottentot slaves. One of our sailors had been making a small wager with a Boor, that he could not snuff the candle with one of his eyes shut. The wager was accepted, but the sailor, pretending to doubt that the Boor would not shut his eye fairly himself, was allowed to keep it shut with his own hand, by which he contrived to cover the whole of one side of his face. He had previously blacked his hand with soot and grease. The

Boor snuffed the candle, the sailor took away his hand, and the company burst into a loud fit of laughter. The Boor thought he had tricked the sailor and joined very vociferously in the merriment. The sailor pretended to complain, and said that it was not fair, and offered to double the wager *that he did not do it with the other eye shut.* The wager was accepted, and the other side of his face was blacked, to the no small amusement of the company. But the Boor himself was the loudest laugher, and this was a continual fresh cause of mirth. After passing a variety of jokes upon him, such as begging him to "*countenance* the introduction of Hottentots," &c. (a late measure of the British Governor,) the Boor detected the joke, and the first direction of his rage was against a poor Hottentot boy that he had with him, for not telling him what was going

forward. The inhabitants of the Cape would have witnessed this cruelty with the greatest indifference, but the feelings of our sailors revolted, and they interfered. A quarrel was nearly ensuing, but the friends of the Boor, finding that they had no chance of a victory without a battle, declined the contest. The Hottentot was detained, to prevent the Boor's exercising his rage upon him at home. This only caused further exasperation, and the Boor retired, uttering a "*Myn God!*" and swearing vengeance on the future. Several of the *Kaffers* were present; a tall and muscular people who admire heroism, and detest the cruel and dastardly Boors. They now gave way to their admiration, and expressed themselves glad to find that the English were not like the *christian mensh*; for they attach no ideas to *christians*, but those of cruelty!

The next day a complaint was lodged against the English sailor. The Boor brought his father-in-law, who was a Dutch nobleman, with a long train of slaves carrying his pedigree and his pipe.

If there be one man more ridiculous than another, it is a Dutch nobleman at the Cape. One would suppose him to be a meditated burlesque upon titles. He has neither power, nor even commendable pride; vulgar and detestable in his manners, and brutal in his mind. In person, the nobleman in question, was rather diminutive in height, but betwixt fat and filth he was of a tolerable rotundity. The English sailor was brought up, and after a fair hearing of the case was discharged, and the affair at present dropt. A short time after this, while sitting alone in the evening, I was

surprised by a gentle tap at the door. On opening it, I discovered a female slave of the Mozambique race. She was stupid beyond any thing that I can describe to you; and all that I could learn of the purpose of her visit was, that she was sent to prepare me for a very agreeable surprize.—Mademoiselle was coming, and the *Groot Baas* (great master) and I were to protect her. In a short time after, it being now the dusk of evening, a most formidable retinue arrived. A little waddling, thick set, chesnut coloured Dutch beauty, with a Cape schoolmaster as her interpreter, and several favourite slaves with a cargo of old plate and other valuables, in a few moments filled my apartment. The schoolmaster began his statement, and the perpetually blushing maiden, who had stood admiring her own red morocco stockings, now rolled her little twinkling

eyes upon me to discover *the expected rapturous emotions of her proposal.* His Excellency Mynheer Von Humboldt was my enemy; and Mademoiselle, his daughter, had fallen in love with me [illegible] a *vendutie,* or public sale! She had brought plate and other valuables to the amount of £50. with which she expected me to purchase a ship and take her to *Vaderland,* her distant country, and maintain her as a nobleman's daughter. The *groot heer* (great gentleman) her father, had been used very ill by my countrymen, and he would pull down the *Spinnekop, (spider legs,* a term given to the British flag) and she wished me to run away with her from the sad doings that were expected.

I now found that this "great gentleman" and the father of Mademoiselle Humboldt, was no other a per-

sonage than the father-in-law of the Boor who had had his face blacked, and who threatened to beat his wife if his father-in-law would not see him righted. How to decline the flattering proposal of [illegible] lady with tolerable grace was a matter of some difficulty. I intimated to her, by the aid of her interpreter, that I was engaged; in reply to which, she pointed to the old silver coffee pots and table spoons! I told her that I could not leave my countrymen in danger. She now consulted some time with her interpreter, and I was briefly informed that she had been very much deceived in my character; that she took me to be a *slim mensh*, (a clever fellow) but she found that I was a very great simpleton. She accordingly withdrew, with her sable train bearing her fortune, which was as unwieldy as herself. I very politely handed her into her sedan chair, into

which were crammed dishes and cullenders, till their mistress was barricaded from my sight. I watched the lessening groupe depart, till the diminishing train expired on my eye balls,—"—then turned away, and"—laughed, ladies, as heartily as ever I did in my life.

I now waited on the Governor and informed him of the alienation of the illustrious Dutchman. A guard being sent to his house, it was discovered that he was absent; his son-in-law was likewise missing, and great crowds of Burghers had been seen passing towards the Table mountain, which, a little to the south of Cape Town, rises in tremendous and towering magnificence. With so much cause for suspicion, the garrison were put under arms. Notwithstanding our number of regular troops were few, owing to

their having been drained in aid of different local enterprizes, nothing could be more contemptible than such a conspiracy. Part of the faithful corps of Hottentots, with a few companies of our infantry, paraded the town and neighbourhood during the whole of the night. One of our frigates in the bay, which was in the best repair, was moored for her broadside, in case of necessity, to bear upon the town. Thus situated, we waited the arrival of day. In the morning, from the citadel, we discovered the rebel army assembled on a height called the Devil's Hill. They had the impudence to send a messenger, commanding us to surrender the town and citadel to 6,000 Burghers! The messenger was a Dutch auctioneer, who was mounted on an old dray horse with his slave riding behind him. Several of our soldiers assisted him in alighting, and he asked

to be blindfolded and led to the Governor. This was a ceremony, however, that was very readily dispensed with;—he was conducted to the Governor, but there was a pride in his waddling gait that seemed to partake of the importance which he attached to his mission. This we indulged, and the excessive respect which was adopted on our part, blew out the swelling dignity of the Dutchman to a caricature that was irresistibly ridiculous. We asked concerning what sales he had in hand. He mentioned several, and hoped to have the pleasure of our company. "'S blood!" said the Governor, "that appears to depend on yourself; if you kill your own customers, how can you expect to live?"

He hoped we would surrender.

The Governor at length put an end to the farce. He gave the auctioneer

half-a-crown for his trouble in coming. "Go," said he, "and tell your six thousand Dutch mummies that if they are not back at their own shops, and at work in less than an hour, *they shall all go to bed without their suppers at night.*"*

This speech had an odd effect on the auctioneer's countenance; he seemed to have an oblique idea of the light in which he had been regarded, and mounting his horse in silence, he set off back on a shuffling trot to his comrades. He had no sooner reached his companions, than a few guns were discharged towards the heights, the shots from which striking the rocks near them, the rebel army began to scamper hastily in any direction but that towards the citadel.

* This phrase has a greater latitude in Dutch than English; implying death, or any other circumstance that takes away the appetite, or prevents its being gratified.

A detachment of dragoons with a few companies of foot were now sent out, and after a most ludicrous pursuit, brought in nearly the whole of these gallant conspirators. A more grotesque appearance than that which they now made, can scarcely be conceived. A regiment of the Shangalla cavalry, mounted on cows, would have produced a more martial effect. They were armed only with such muskets as are employed in the chace, and with which they could not hit scarce any mark smaller than an elephant. They were mostly on horse back, and the difficulties which they experienced in dismounting were the cause of so much laughter, that all our resentment was lost in our mirth. His Excellency M. Von Humboldt, and a few of his most active adherents, were however kept under arrest, and the remainder were directed to go quietly about their

concerns. Here this tremendous affair terminated. Of the enamoured Mademoiselle Humboldt, I saw no more, but heard that she soon afterwards bestowed her person and her plate on a German trumpeter.

The remainder of our time was divided by occasional incursions up the country. The art of colonial enterprize is, I hope, at present in its infancy. On its now acting principles it is a system of terror and injustice. When luxury and wealth have undermined, to a certain degree, the energies of what is called the civilized world, some dreadful retaliation, like a deluge, may overwhelm and annihilate us; some little green island perhaps in the south, with its handful of heroes, directing the tide of retribution, shall change the seat of knowledge.

I left the Cape with something like regret. I shall long remember the hospitality of its many worthy and respected inhabitants. It is capable of being made a noble colony, if it remain in our possession, and a more liberal line of conduct is adopted towards the natives. The Hottentots are an amiable but ill-used people. Their fidelity and patience ought to have secured to them a better fate. But they have hitherto been considered only in the light of *Zwarte Vee*, or black cattle, an appellation by which they are generally honored.

The notice which has been bestowed on my conduct since my arrival in England, is honorable to the feelings of the nation; but I am aware that it is in the valiant arm and the intrepid and vigilant eye of an English sailor, that the honor ought to find its home.

I have been flattered by the offer of an honorable and distinguished post in the navy, but have at present declined it. I must further investigate my own character. How far I was designed for such an employment is, at present, questionable to myself. In the heart of her own society, my country shall not find me indolent, nor inattentive to her interests; and in saying this I neither feel conscious of pride nor ingratitude."

Here Ned concluded his narrative: the recital appeared to call up painful recollections both in himself and his companion, and they took an early leave.

Most of his auditors gave way to the feelings which he had excited.——— The tears stood in Mrs. Mordent's eyes, as her reflections carried her

back to other days. She recollected the forlorn and naked circumstances of Ned's youth; and the flashing traces of his character, through whatever situation in life he had passed, called forth a mingled sentiment of admiration and regret. Not so the pensive Helen; sad experience had not there thrown a cloud over the prospects of hope; a delightful and tender sentiment swelled in her heart and she retired at an early hour to indulge in the soft delirium alone. The rude realities of life would occasionally cross the rising visions of her mind, but sleep chased them as phantoms from the brain;—and

"——— Hope at her pillow sat,
And whisper'd golden dreams."

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.